

# 300 CHINESE CHARACTERS IN A DAY

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300 CHINESE  
CHARACTERS IN A DAY

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This book is a foray into the ideographic nature of one of the world's most ancient systems of writing - Chinese. Presented in this book is an ideographic explanation of the first 300 characters in a list of the most frequent Chinese characters. The ideographic associations, the author believes, constitute a powerful learning aid which can shorten the time taken to familiarize oneself with these three hundred ancient characters from a period of several months of study to a period of less than 24 hours intense exploration.


The explanations given are not explanations of characters as symbols, but plausible ideographic associations of the character's visual form with the popular meaning the character has in current usage. Further, it is for the first time in recorded history that it is being demonstrated the possibility that all Chinese characters can be understood as pure ideographs.

## **How do I use the book?**

The reader is urged to browse through the explanations given for the characters, in sequential order. As he sees more of these ideograms, their building blocks, and develops a sense of the logic that binds them together, the field of these symbols will become increasingly familiar to him.

Repetition is used as a pedagogical tool in this book. And the reader will find the explanations of a character repeated in multiple places.

Once a reasonable familiarity with around 300 ideograms are gained, the reader is urged to venture into attempting to read Chinese texts with a dictionary. The software dictionary 'Wenlin' is recommended.

的 

[de]

is a **grammatical particle** which

symbolizes possession. Gives a meaning similar to 's in



English. To make plain (白 [bái] white, clear, plain, a form resembling that of a white silkworm cocoon) what is



contained (勺 [sháo] spoon, the picture of a spoon with something contained. ) The more ancient forms of 勺,



appear as





[yī]



**Unity, one, whole.** An ideographic

depiction of the concept of a whole, or unity.



[shì]



**Is, is so, to be.** That

which is real. The ancient ideograph was composed of the

image of a rising sun



. The ancient symbol of the



Sun being . This was likely distorted by the use of the brush as a writing implement, which made the drawing of lines easier than circles or dots, into the modern form 日 [rì]. The horizontal line below it in the ancient form could have

symbolized the horizon, and the vertical line the idea of



breakthrough. The foot symbolizes restrain. Hence, the character becomes restrain under an actively manifested force. As a memory hint: the feeling evoked when



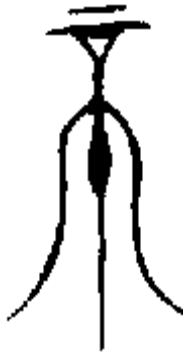
one stands facing the rising sun manifestation to reality.



- A

The modern form has become a combination of 正 and 日. 正[zhèng] means right, straight, correct, a character interpreted by Wieger as "To 止 stop at the 一 line," "without going astray." And 是[shì] is "what was 正 controlled at 日 sun's light," "truthfulness, reality, existence," in an interpretation Wieger gives.


[bù]



**No, not, negation. A**

character indicating negation. The ancient Chinese dictionary, the Shuo Wen, says it is the picture of a bird flying in the skies. That which defies capture, in a sense. The present-day form is composed of a line depicting the skies, and the picture of a bird in flight. The ancient form is composed of the ancient



character for above, high, etc., , which has the idea of that which is above referred to by a shorter line above a longer foundational line, together with the imagery of a bird.



了 [le, liǎo]



The idea of completion, a new

state generated. The picture of a newborn baby



swaddled . The meaning is self-explanatory from the form. The sound is similar to that made by an infant.

在 [zài]



**At, in, on, be.** Indicating the place, in space or time, of activity. Indicating the state of activity. The character is



composed of 土 [tǔ] meaning land, place, location, earth. 土, in its ancient form, was the image of a mound of



earth 在 . The first three strokes of 在 are a distortion of 才 [cái], a character meaning talent or potential. 才 has ancient forms which suggest active potential, the ability to



breakthrough 才 . Shuo Wen says the character 才 is the image of a sprout.



[rén]



**Person.** The picture of a person

bowing down. Certain ancient variants have the image of



‘above, skies, heaven’ over the man . The idea that man in his natural state of existence is subservient to the Heavens. In later variants the man can be seen bowing down



on the floor.



[wǒ] **I, me.** The imagery of a weapon, in

ancient forms. Resembling a hand holding a weapon in today’s written form. The right side of the present-day form is





戈 [gē] , likely a pictograph of a Chinese axe or halberd or spear. The left side has come to resemble in presentday writing the character form for a hand 手[shǒu] . This allows for the interpretation, a hand holding a spear, emphasizing the ego, self , the individual.

The Shuo Wen says the left side derives from the

character 揚 [ 揚 ] chuí] abstracted, a character which conveyed a sense ‘to droop down from,’ or, according another source, ‘to kill.’ A ancient variant form of the character being



In its most ancient forms, the entire character was just the

imagery of some kind of a weapon

我

我 我 我 我

我 我 我 我 我

The weapon being that by which the ego emphasizes itself.

Variants include:

我 我 我 我 我

有

[yǒu]



. Have, there is, to

**posses**. The picture of a right hand



holding a strip



of meat 肉[ròu, meat/flesh]

. To have, be in

possession of. Contrary to what more ancient forms suggest, some traditional interpretations say the character derives



from the picture of a hand and the moon

. This form

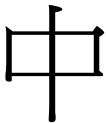
is argued to be generative of the idea that material possessions are ephemeral. Note that in presentday writing, 肉[ròu], when occurring as a component, is usually



represented as 月, with the same form as that of 月



[yuè] 'moon.'

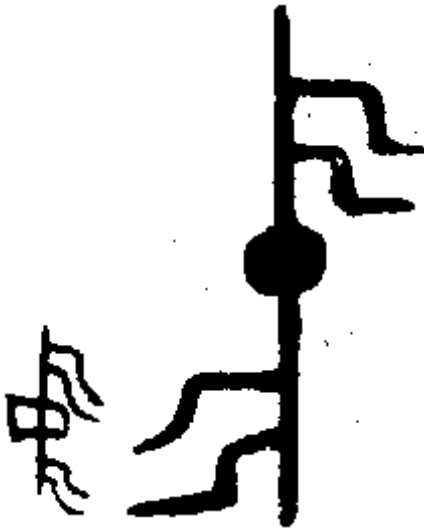


[zhōng]



**Middle, in.** The center,

depicted by a rod passing through the center of a loop. In some variations emanations are seen from the central rod,



, perhaps the idea that at the center is the unmoved-mover, the generative factors of change emanating from the axial center of a system.

# 這

[zhè, zhèi] **This.** The character consists of two

components. A component 辵 [chuò] indicating journey, movement, which is an abstraction of 辵, which in turn is an



abstraction of the image of a foot on crossroads together with 言 [yán, words]. The form of 言 as is written now is suggestive of words emerging from a mouth. In ancient



writing, 言 had the form , which has the image of



a mouth , an upside down man, and the ideograph



representing 'above' . Here the man being aligned in opposition to the manifested hierarchy suggests personal will, a personal intent is a perception of that which seeks to generate an order that the 'flow' does not generate, hence the sense of opposed-alignment with reality. Mouth is that which expresses intent. Hence, 言, in a sense, is creative expression or the word. 這 may therefore ideographically be



interpreted as words, or intent which refers to



something encountered in a journey .

大

[dà]



Great, immense, big,

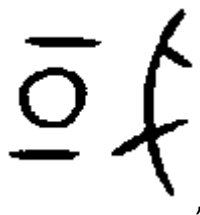
**Expansive.** A large person standing between Heaven and Earth. The Heavens are immense, The Earth is Immense, The Man is equally immense says the Shuo Wen. Heaven, Earth, and Man form a Trinity in ancient Chinese thought. As a mnemonic, the character may be thought of as the image of a man with arms outstretched as if to say “big.”

國

[guó]



Country, state, nation. The



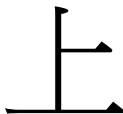
central portion of the character is 或 [huò]



, which originally had the meaning a city or state. A region of space 隹[wéi], or a walled enclosure, protected by arms 戈[gē, ancient Chinese weapon]. The 一 represents the walled structures. In modern usage, 或 [huò] has the meanings “Or, perhaps, may be, etc.” The sense might derive from that a city is never stabilized through armaments and walls alone, but only through virtue. The unstable nature of a



fortified town, and its boundaries. 國 , a country, is an enclosure 隹[wéi] of many such states.



[shàng]



**Above, high, over,**

**ascend, higher, above.** An abstract form indicating the idea of ascension in a hierarchy. Ancient variants included



, etc. The character is also used to refer to the idea 'last, previous' – this may be memorized by analogy to time as a flowing river - what occurred previously, then occurred higher in its course.




[gè,ge]. **A general measure word.** In Chinese,

measure words are used before nouns. A measure word indicates the number of a thing, as we may say three *slices* of cake, in English. In Chinese, a measure word must precede every noun. 固 [gù] is attributed the meanings "(Strong fence:) strong, solid; obstinate, rude; assuredly," by Kalrgren. 'Consolidated, strengthened, certainly, as a matter of course' are also among the meanings conveyed by 固. A consolidated unit. The left side of the character 個 is 亻 a short-form for 人 (rén, person). A man's perception of consolidated units. To



analyze the components of 固, we find a defined boundary 囗 [wéi], 十 ten, and 口 [kǒu] mouth. The space of the universe is considered 10 dimensional in Chinese thought.




十, ten, , is thus an abstraction of expanse in all direction. 古 indicates expression. 古 [gǔ] is thus established expression, and in modern usage has the meaning 'ancient.' A



variant of 個 is 箇 which has the component for



bamboo twigs 竹 [zhú] above . The twigs convey a sense of 'to count, units, unit patterns, etc.'







來

[lái]

**Come, bring, crop up, take**

**place.** The picture of an awned wheat or barley plant. The grains were thought to have *come* from the Heavens.

他

[tā]

**He , she, him, her, it.** The left side of the

character is the picture of a man 亻 (人 rén, person) and on the right is 也 (yě, which has the meaning ‘also’). A person referred to or included, by reference, in a conversation. 也



(yě) is a containing element, the picture of a vase in ancient forms. In present usage it conveys the sense ‘and,’ ‘also,’ etc. In classical Chinese, 也 was used to mark the end of a phrase or sentence.

為

[wèi, wéi].



On, for, on account of, to,

**stand for, support, act/serve as, by.** The ancient forms of the character show a hand guiding an elephant. The elephant, an animal of conspicuous form, shows manifested phenomenon, perhaps, and the hand is the intent which seeks



to guide its course.

. That by which, on

account of which, or for which the evolved phenomenon is being guided.

到

[dào] **To reach, to, to arrive.**



. On

the right of the character is the picture of a 刀 (刀) dāo ('knife',



'sword') , and on the left is the image of bird flying down to the earth. Restrained movement ( restrain as suggested by the imagery of a sword), towards a target. The





left hand side is the character 至 (zhì) meaning, to,



until, till, etc. Lindqvist interprets as the "picture of an arrow that has reached its target." Shou Wen, however, maintains it is the picture of a bird flying from a height downwards.

地 [dì]  Earth, land soil, field,

**ground.** Is composed of the picture of a mound of earth 土

(tǔ)  and 也 (yě) the picture of a vessel .也 reinforces the feminine nature of earth, as that which contains the seeds, as that which nourishes, etc.

和 [hé] **And, with, harmony.** From 禾 [hé, 'grain']



and 口 [kǒu, 'mouth']






signifying

together a harmonious relationship. Things that go harmoniously together.


時 [shí]  Time, season, epoch, period.

On the left of the character is 日 [rì], the image of the sun. The character 日 has the extended meaning 'day.' The movement of the sun is indicative of the passage of time. On the right is 寺 (sì, 'temple'). The character 寺 is composed of 寸[cùn, inch/measure], and above which is a character with the meaning 'evolving from,' 之 (zhī). 之 had two ancient forms,


one of a foot stepping forth from a line , suggesting an evolution from a whole, and another of a plant sprouting

forth  . 寺 , thus, is measured evolution. 寸



had the ancient form  and was likely a measurement associated with the palm or the wrist. The distance between the base of the palm and the pulse point, thus an inch, says Wieger. Ancient variants of 寸 such as



 seem to refer to the pulse itself. In the thought of some ancient traditions, each form was thought to have a rhythm of evolution associated with it. And a form was often measured in multiples of its unique fundamental measure.



The most ancient variants of 時, were written as 





, with the components being the image of the sun 日



and 之



.



[men]. **A pluralizing suffix.** The word serves as a

pluralizing suffix for pronouns and human nouns. From 亻 (人 rén) 'person', and 門 (mén. door) which plays a role of indicating the sound of the character as well. Such a



component is called a phonetic component. 門,



, at the same time, through its representation of the *two* leaves of a door indicates a kind of plurality.



年

[nián]



Year, harvest. The



character is composed of the image of 禾

( hé, grain



) over 千[qiān]

, the character for thousand. A

*thousand grains harvested, a year.*



千, thousand,

is composed of the picture of a man



人

, along with the symbol for the number ten 十



. As mnemonic, 千 [qiān] is a span corresponding to 10 human lifetimes.



[shēng]



**Life, give birth.** The image of a



plant growing. . Is composed of the images of a



sprout 屮[chè]



and imagery of the earth

土[tǔ]





[huì]

**Meet; can, able.** The Shuo Wen

explanation is that the character is composed of 厶



[jí, wú] , which through the ordered assemblage

of three lines suggest a harmonious coming-together, along

with 曾 abstracted.

曾 is described as the evolution of breath, the creative breath, perhaps, and is composed of 𠂔 [yuē], meaning 'say', which in ancient form is the picture of a mouth with words or breath



emanating from it

. Above it is the



picture of a window

, which is a patternized exit out

of a system. 八 (bā, eight) indicates a formative division. The


number is associated with the baguas, eight patterns in which


creation evolves out. *Ordering* △ *on emanated patterns of the creative breath* 曾, *thus*.

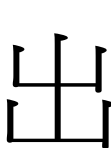
**Note:** Ancient variant of 會 such as

generates other visual interpretations, which may serve for a better understanding of concepts related to the form: The produce of a field 田 brought together △ for consumption (indicated by a mouth □ and something contained). To meet, assemble, gather, an occasion.

When concepts gather together coherently, one comprehends. Hence the extended meaning *to understand*. Likewise, *to be able to* do something is to be able to get one's faculties to work together in harmony. Certain ancient forms

of the character, such as  do not have 田 but allows for a visual interpretation as food laid out, as during a banquet – to meet over food. The ancient form of 甘(gān,

tasty, sweet, the perception of beauty) was .



[chū]



**Emit, go out.** Ancient forms show

a foot stepping out of an enclosure. The Shuo Wen attributes



the form to the character, however interprets the form as a sprout growing out. This is an interpretation that



seems to apply better to variant forms such as , as well as, perhaps, to the current form of the ideogram. It is as well likely that the present character, as well as the later variants, are a distortion resulting from a later deviated understanding of the elements of the original ideographic form.



# 就

[jiù] **just, simply, right away.** 尤[yóu], the right

hand side of the character is composed of the image of a grass



sprouting out in spring 乙

and the image of a hand




. Growing out of hand, so to speak. That which stands out, special, extraordinary, one making a transgression, fault, outstanding etc. On the left is the picture of a tower 京 [jīng]



. 京 suggests an upward flow of energies. Together the components suggest a sudden, natural upward evolution. 就高也, says the Shuo Wen .


子 [zǐ, zì]



**Child, Person, historically the**

**character was used to refer to a Master and was a title of respect.** The picture of a child in swaddling clothes, the legs are not visible. When the arms are hidden as well, the character is 了 (le). Acts as a noun-suffix.

要 [yào]



**Want, need, will.** The ancient



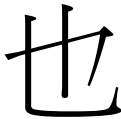
form shows two arms seeking a woman . The

ideogram for a woman was a kneeling female figure with



prominent breasts

. Want, need.




[yě]





In present-day usage, the


**meaning is ‘also’, and the character is also used as a conjunction mechanism between phrases.** In Classical Chinese, it marked the end of a phrase or sentence. Ancient forms show the picture of a vase. That which contains, holds, or brings together, and thus organizes the elements —a vessel.

以 [yǐ]  Using, so that, etc. The ancient

form was an upturned fetus. Coming to form in reality, coming to serve a purpose of. Wieger interprets the form as an emanation of the breath. "This very ancient character is supposed to represent the exhalation of the breath, the virtue that emanates from any object, its action, its use. By extension, use till exhaustion, to terminate, " says Wieger. Breath as the creative, perhaps.

According to the Wenlin dictionary, " also came to be

written  yǐ, which is an obsolete synonym of 以. Then

 was reduced to 厶, slightly distorted into 亅 plus 丶, and for the meaning 'use as, consider as', 人 rén 'person' was added to the right side, resulting in 以. Wenlin shows the following pattern of evolution in the form.

言

人

以

說

[shuō]

說

. Say, Speak. The left side of the

character is 言 [yán, words], the ideographic interpretation of which has been already discussed. The right side 兌 has the meaning Joyous, the character is attributed to the triagram



[bagua] and hexagram . “Joy, cheerful talk, to barter... 兌 something (words) coming out of a 人 human 口 mouth,” says Karlgren. A mouth 口 associated with a human 人 form, emanates patterns of Joy 兌 (bā, eight) – expression. “說釋也從言兌聲一曰談說,” says the Shuo Wen.



學 [xué]

Study,



**learn;** The top portion of the character shows two hands perceiving 爻 [yáo] which are patterns of interaction of yin and yang (two fundamental concepts in Chinese cosmology corresponding loosely to the female and the male, the passive and the active, etc. ), the lines in the guas of the bagua. The child being seated in a house, or under a veiling

roof, suggests he is within a system, perceiving factors that



are apparently beyond it.

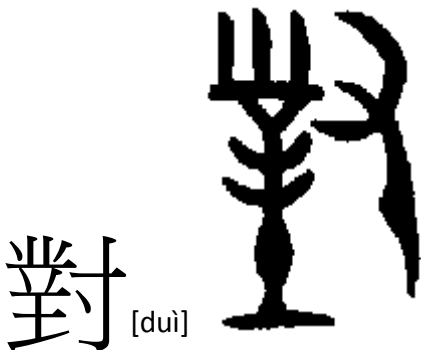


**grammatical particle used to link a verb and the manner clause that follows it [dé] get, reach, achieve [děi] should.** In ancient China, cowrie shells were used as currency. The ideogram, in its most ancient forms, conveys senses of achievement through the imagery of a hand





reaching for a cowry , and by extension conveys a sense of that which *should* be done. The component 𠂔 (chì), interpreted as footsteps by traditional dictionaries, image of the half of a crossroads in ancient forms) was added in later forms, and reinforces an idea of movement.



**Correct; yes; mutual;**

**pair; treat; agree; right, as regards.** The character shows a hand ordering a bush growing forth from the ground. To bring order to, make agreeable, etc. That which is being, or has been properly tended to. Ancient variants as



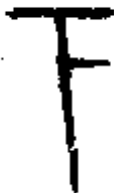
make this sense more apparent. Other variants



include and . 寸 (cùn) here suggests measured creative action.



[xià]



**Under, down, below,**

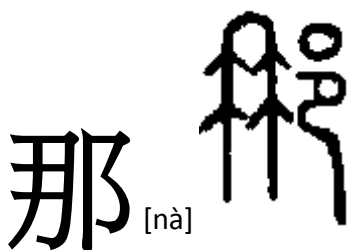
**next.** That which is below, ancient forms include



which is a shorter line below a longer



fundamental, which suggest a downward hierarchy, descension, downward evolution, etc. The next in a sequence, latter, the sense may be derived by analogy of the flow of time with the flow of a river – the latter occurs further down in its evolution.



**That, then, in that case.**

Originally was the name of a county or state. On the left of



the character is "The hair just growing on the body. It might be considered as 毛 (máo) inverted and

doubled," says Wieger. It might as well be the depiction of a fur coat. Karlgren attributes the meaning 'advance, go gradually,' to the form. A sense of protection offered by a fur coat. Hair may as well be understood as patterns emanating from the surface of a system. On the right is 邑 (yì, 'city')



and depicts a person kneeling conformant to the



ordering walls of a city. 那, then, is conformance to



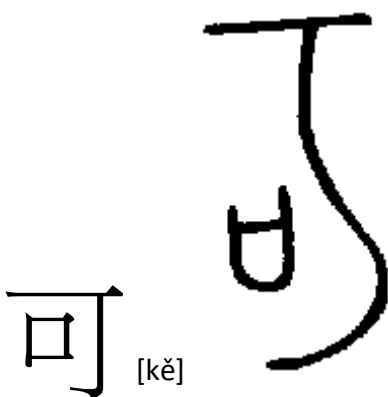
the emanated patterns - which explains the meanings 'in that case,' 'then,' etc. "That" is a reference to a particular emanated pattern. 哪 nǎ is a question particle with the meanings, which; what; how, and is 那 modified with 口 (kǒu, mouth, conveying the sense 'expression') – an expression which seeks resolution in a manifested surface

pattern of a particular system. Note that when 𠂔 occurs on



the right of a character, it is

abstracted.



[kě]

can; may; be worth;

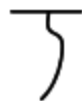
**indicating possibility.** From the image of a mouth 口

(kǒu), and an ideographic form








[qiǎo, kǎo] suggesting



expansion of what is emanated from it.



is "a symbol analogous to that of 气 etc.," according to Karlgren. Expansion of a creative expression, possibility, can, may, be worth. The

expansion  of  against an ordering hindrance,  
indicated by , according to a traditional explanation.

Variants of the form include , , and



過 [guò] 過 pass, go by, go through.

Consists of 辵 (chuò), along with 𠂔 guō is

the picture of a skeleton 𠂔 and a 口 (kǒu, mouth)  
 口戾不正也從口𠂔聲, says the Shuo Wen, explaining 𠂔.  
 Ideographically, this suggests a violent transformative entry  
 into the frame of a system. For a system to go through a  
 process, is for it to be affected in its bones, in its very frame.  
 Ancient variants of the form 𠂔 reinforce this idea:

, with the image of a foot, a path, the imagery of a framework.

[yú],

**at, to, from, by.** The idea of

evolution of energy from a source, toward a state, etc.

According to Karlgren, the character is "said to be a symbol of an exclamation, analogous to 丐 qiǎo and 乎 hū, cf. also 气 qì." The lines horizontal are said to indicate a level expansion of the energy, or, perhaps, indicating a surface of the





expanding energy-wave. Variants include:



[zhī] 's. The character indicates a

relationship similar to one suggested by 's, similar to 的 (de), and as a classical pronoun, the character conveyed the sense 'it.' There are two ancient variants to

the character, both of which indicate evolution from an origin. One is the image of a foot stepping forth from a unity



, and another is the image of a plant sprouting forth



[hòu] **queen**, an extension of the monarch's body.

From whom the lineage is continued. The ancient forms are



the image of a woman in profile , giving out commands


□ (indicated by the picture of a mouth, and the creative expression therefrom).





[hòu] **after, back, later in sequence**. The left

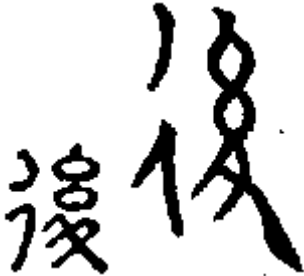
side of the character is 彳, a component indicating footsteps

or movement, and in ancient forms was the image of a crossroads. On the right side is 𠂔 [yāo] a form interpreted by Karlgren as a “Picture of silk cocoons with threads.” and below

it is 攴 [zhǐ]  , a component meaning ‘walk slowly’. 攴 is sometimes interpreted as the image of a person

 walking with his feet restrained by a

something  , or with a cane, etc.. In ancient variants, it is often the picture of a downturned foot, indicating a restrain in movement. 𠂔 here is likely analogous to the symbol of a

string, and signifying connectedness. 



. A kind of connected-restrained movement; in a sequence, later, that which comes later, etc. Note that in the traditional Kang Xi systems of organizing the radicals, when 夂 occurs at the top of a character, it's radical 34 (夂 zhǐ); at the bottom, it's radical 35 (夂 suī).

主

[zhǔ] **Lord, main, principal.**

主 鎧 中 火 主 𠂔 象 形 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 聲

, says the Shuo Wen. The fire in a lamp. Ancient forms include



能

[néng]

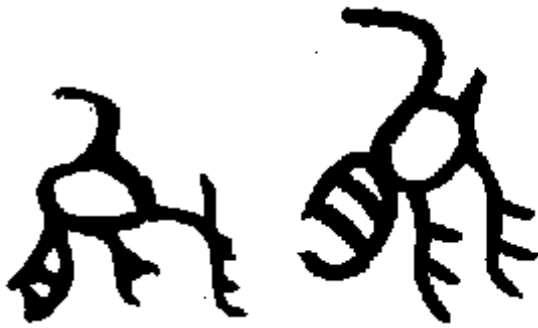


Can, be able; indicative of

**capability.** The ancient forms show the image of a bear



carrying meat in its mouth.



A bear like beast  
with the feet of deer, say some traditional sources.

里 [lǐ]




village; half

**kilometer, length measure of about 600 meters; neighborhood.** From 田[tián] meaning field, and 土[tǔ]



suggesting place, earth. 田 shows the merging of the passive and the active, indicated by a vertical and horizontal line, in a region. The rectangular frame suggests an ordering of the four elements. If the frame is

circular, it implies a higher more harmonious ordering. The circular is associated with the Heavens, while the

quadrangular is associated with the Earth. 土  is earth, the primal material, in a sense. The meaning village derives from, a region 土 of fecund activity 田.

裏  里

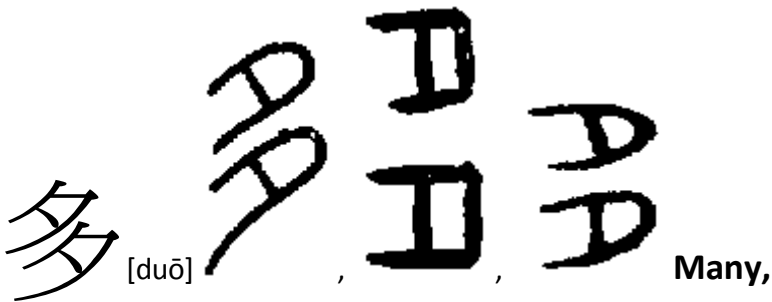
**Inside.** In this ideograph, we have 里 [ place], inside the



ideogram for a veil or garment 衣 [yī, clothing, garment]. The region within, is the ideographic sense. A variant of the ideogram is written 裡, with 衤 on the left side



of the character. 衤 is an abstracted form of 衣 [yī, clothing].

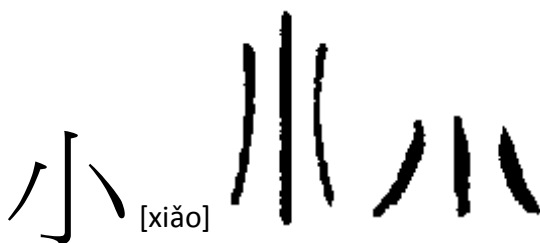


**much, multiplicity.** "Two 夕 [xī, a picture of the moon], meaning symbolically, reduplication, multiplication, multitude, many," says Wieger. An unraveling into the multitude. The moon being used as an ideogram on account of ideas of the Sun and the Moon together being generative of the multitude, the moon being the feminine aspect through whom the multiplicative vitality manifests. Note that 夕,





, , , has the meanings sunset, evening, etc., conveyed through the imagery of a half moon.



[xiǎo]

**Small.** The micro of

matter, says the Shuo Wen. In division 八, or separation of matter of a realm, one penetrates 丨 to a vision of matter in the micro. “This idea is represented by the 八[bā, Eight, a number indicating division, partition, formative separation, etc.] partition of an 丨 object already small by its nature,”

says Wiegner. Variants of the character include



, and other variants show the image of an eye



below the presentday form

而

[ér]



**And, furthermore.** The picture of a

beard. That which extends from the face. Conveys thus the



idea of extension

. “而 was a picture of a beard, whiskers,” says Karlgren.

你

[nǐ]

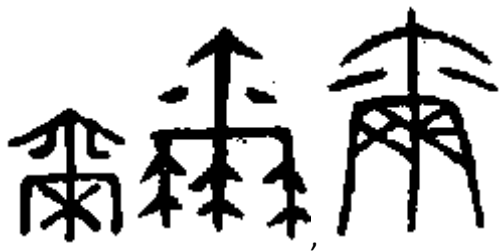
**You.** According to Karlgren, “Etymologically 你

nǐ is a ‘colloquial variation’ of 尔(爾) ěr; the two sounds nǐ and ěr both derive from ancient nzie.” 爾 may be interpreted as an ideogram showing beautiful patterns on the veil. Patterns of



beauty on the loom.

. Variants of 爾 include



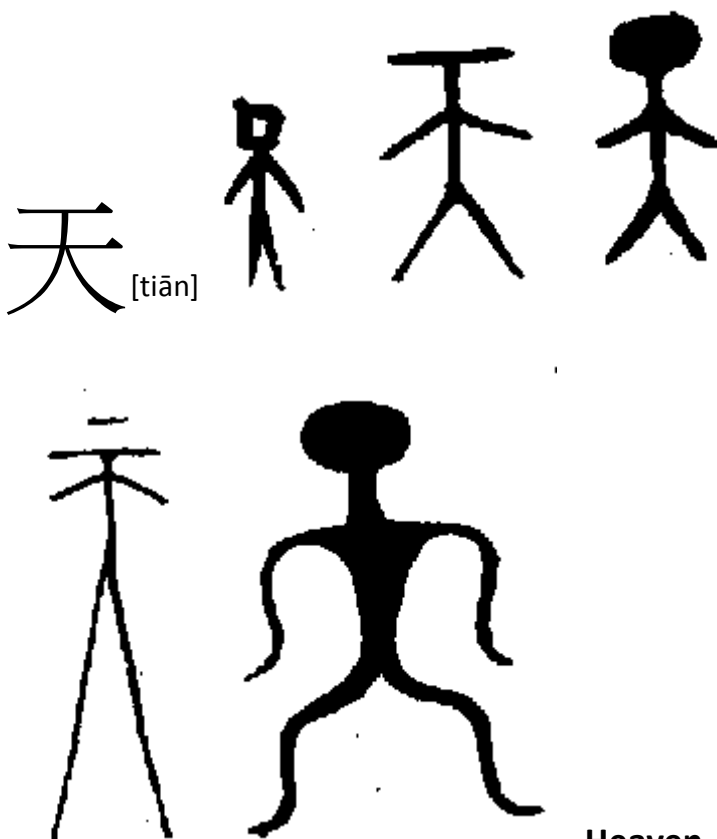
The above half of 爾 and likely the right side of the presentday 你 -



- is interpreted by the Shuo Wen as

“詞之必然也從丨八八象气之分散入聲” Weiger cites a source saying, “从入丨八, 會意。八者气之分也。” From 入[rù; the idea of entrance; image of roots entering the ground, according to some] 丨 [suggesting vertical movement, a world axis] 八[bā, suggesting division]. The spontaneous evolution of the creative word, perhaps. A dispersal 八 from a whole. 入 through its analogy to the form of roots conveys the idea of absorption back to the whole as well. Oneself, in relation to otherselves .

Karlgren says, "...original sense and hence explanation of [爾] character[is] uncertain", while he considers 尔 an abbreviation from the same. Note also that on the left side of 你 is the abbreviated form 亻 of 人 (rén, person).



### Heaven, Sky,

**Day.** The extend of space above man. Heavens, sky, etc. The space above man is abstracted by a square, a circle, a line, the character for 'above', etc.

家

[jiā]



**Home, house, family;**

The idea abstracted by the image of a boar underneath a roof - domestication.

去

[qù]



**Go, leave, depart;** From the

picture of a man and the picture of a mouth, in the most ancient forms. From the picture of a man and a



crucible in later forms. The idea of transformation,

separative movement, etc.

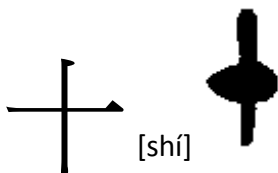
從大U聲

, says the Shuo Wen. From 大(dà, big) and the picture of a utensil which plays a phonetic role according to the Shuo Wen. Karlgren interprets the form as "a cup with a removable lid: that which gets off, is removed."



**Work.** "Picture of a carpenter's square," says

Karlgren. And Lindqvist observes: "Going back to the older forms of the character, it is obvious that many have a heavy lower part that could be interpreted as the stone used to pound the earth; the upper part in that case would be the shaft or handle."



[shí]

**Ten.** An abstract form representing

spread in all directions. The world is ten-dimensional in



ancient Chinese conceptualizations.

A vertical axis

and spread in all directions on the plane perpendicular to it.

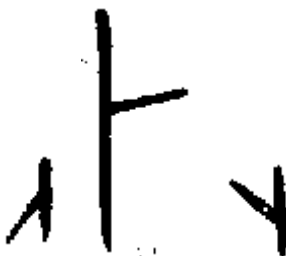
The ancient forms seem to show a disc penetrated.



[yòng]

**That which can be employed. Use.**

**Useful. Employ.** "A bronze tripod," says Wieger. "A target (中) with an arrow in the middle," says Karlgren. Shuo Wen



says the form derives from 卜

(bǔ,

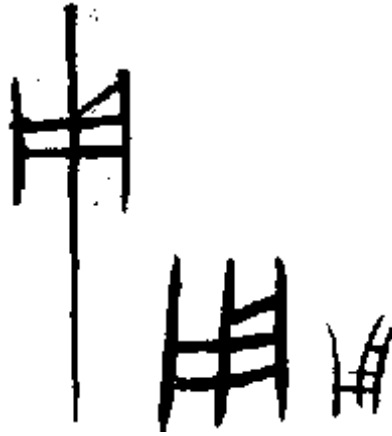




fortune telling) and 中 (zhōng, indicating the center). 卜 is the image of cracks on tortoise shells subject to heat, the patterns of which were used in divination during ancient times. 用 That which evolves from the central unmoved-mover. Evolvability, employability, the idea of putting a thing to use. Note that in ancient forms the structure penetrated by the central line is a quadrangular



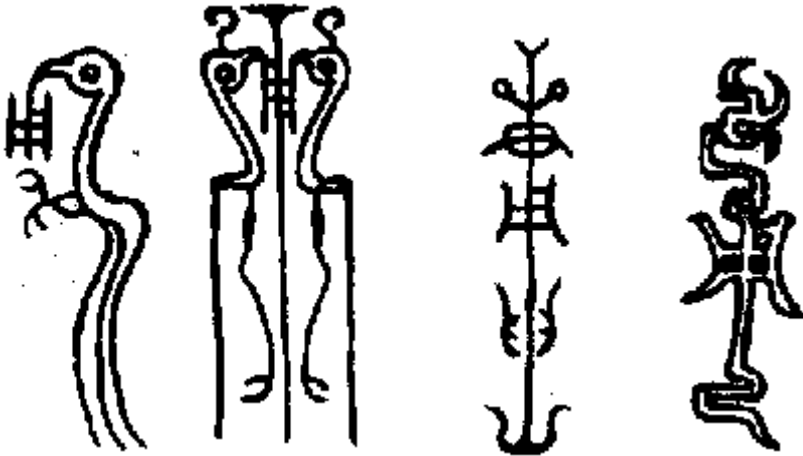
structure , and this likely signifies an



ordering of the elements, etc.



Embellished variants of the character include:





. Note that 舟[zhōu] boat takes the form



in some of its most ancient forms. Here we may find analogy to the world as a vessel, its mast being the axis, etc.



[zuò] **do; make.** From 亻 (人 rén) 'person' and 乍



zhà phonetic. 乍 is a character with meanings sudden, abrupt, etc. Shuo Wen says it is the image of a person attempting to leave a space 凵, encountering patterns of hindrance 一. 凵 [wáng, flee, disappear, old form of 亡] is from 入[rù] 'enter' and 乚[yǐn, the hidden boundary] a place of meeting of the skies, as suggested by the vertical, with

earth, as suggested by the horizontal - the horizon. 厶 is a hidden place, a corner, etc., according to traditional



interpretations. Ancient forms of 冂 include



. Difficulty encountered by a person 亻 in leaving a space, or breaking through a restricting region – work. Ancient variants of the



character include



The Wenlin dictionary notes, “There is another character

做

zuò with the same sound and almost the same

meaning. Unfortunately you have to know whether to use 作 or 做 in any particular context. Use 作 for 'making' abstract things, 做 for 'making' concrete objects.” 做 is composed of the picture of a man, 亻, 古 [gǔ] signifying an established

expression, and on the right is 攴 [pū, beat, signifying an action with force] "攴 is a right hand equipped with a mattock



or axe held high, " according to Linqvist; small beats according to the Shuo Wen which says it



is composed of the image of a hand 又



and the character for divination 卜



分

[fēn]

分 分

Divide, fraction;

The idea of a 刀

刀

(dāo) knife, sword, being used to

divide 八

八

[bā] a thing.

發

[fā] Emit, send out, express, begin

發

𠂔

On top of the character is the radical 𠂔 [bō] which are "Two 止 (zhǐ foot) in contrary directions," according to Wieger. The component is traditionally referred to as 登字頭 [dēng zì tóu, meaning the 'head portion of the character 登

登

']. 登 has the meanings ascend, climb, mount, and Wieger interprets it as "To 𠂔 ascend upon a 豆 pedestal, firstly with one foot, then with the other." The left portion of



the lower half the character is 弓(gōng, bow). 弓



is the picture of a bow.

The right portion of the lower half of the character is a hand



holding a weapon 攴[shū]



, possibly an arrow, in this case. An old variant,



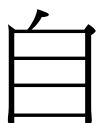
發, had 矢

[shǐ] 'arrow' instead of 攴.

The two 止 feet suggests movement, one complementing the other, and according to Wieger the two feet convey a sense of



, "separation, divergence, letting loose." To emit arrows in various directions, to spread, to expand, etc.



[zì] **Self.** The picture of a nose.



“(Breath:)

self; personally; by itself, naturally; (pass out:) out from, from ...picture of the nose in a human face (and means 'nose' e.g. in 鼻); breath > self, cf. Sanskrit atman- 'breath' and 'self'; in compounds often contracted into 白, e.g. 皇, 習,” says Karlgren. While Wieger says the nose is the “Starting point, the origin, beginning, evolution; the nose being, according to Chinese embryology, the starting point of bodily evolution.” In the observation of Lindqvist, in China one points to one’s nose to indicate oneself.

成 [chéng] **Complete, become, succeed.**



The picture of a tool driving in a nail. The sound of the character is that made when a nail is driven in. In some ancient forms,



only the head of the nail is seen

都 [dōu]  All, already

[dū] **Capital city.** The left side of the character 者 zhě, which is the picture of an incense burning, a substance manifesting its nature, conveying by extension the meaning ‘one who.’ On the right side is the image of a city, the idea of



subservience to the bounding laws of a city . Those who are bound by a city’s laws – *all*. Those *already* brought under the Kingdom’s ordering.

方 [fāng]

Side, Square, Method,

**Prescription, Then.** The image of boats being brought together 併船, abstracted.

“併船也象兩舟省總頭形凡方之屬皆从方,” says the Shuo Wen.

A boat docks with another on its *side* - One of the boats’

heads and another’s side



seem depicted in the

pictograph. The symbol for water



can be seen in



some variants

. In some variants, it seems as



if the boat is docking at a harbor



The coming together or connecting of a system with another, the merging happening on a particular *side* of the system.

Some variants forms of the character seem to show images of boats tied together to form a *square* or rectangular




pontoon . A *method* is needed to bring together two systems. A *prescription*, or *recipe* is a way of bringing together systems.


The adverbial sense - *then, just then* - derives from the sense

‘to meet with’- an idea of what followed when something was encountered – note how the imagery of a boat docking with a harbor conveys the sense. The word-phrase 方知 (fāngzhī) means ‘know for the first time, to discover.’

於 <sub>[yú]</sub> 於 於 at; to; from; out of;

**by.** A character with a sense similar to 于 [yú]. **On the left side of it we see** 方 two systems merging, and on the top-right is an ideogram possibly signifying absorption,

with a form similar to 入  [rù, enter]. And on right-below is an ideographic form suggesting a dualistic

interaction. 二  [èr, two]. Shuo Wen gives the form





, and says it is from an ancient character that was the image of a bird, later abstracted.



[mín]



People, masses, a

**group.** The Shuo Wen says it is the picture of proliferating

sprouts of plants

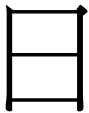


好 [hǎo] 好 子 中

好

**Good.** [hào] **Like; Be fond of** [hāo] **With care.** The idea conveyed by the image of a woman playing with a child. From 女 (nǚ) 'woman' and 子 (zǐ) child.

子路




[rì] sun; day;



. Some of the

most ancient forms of the character at times show a square

boundary , the result of it being written on the surface of bones. The image of a solar disc.



還

[hái]



still, yet [huán] return, give

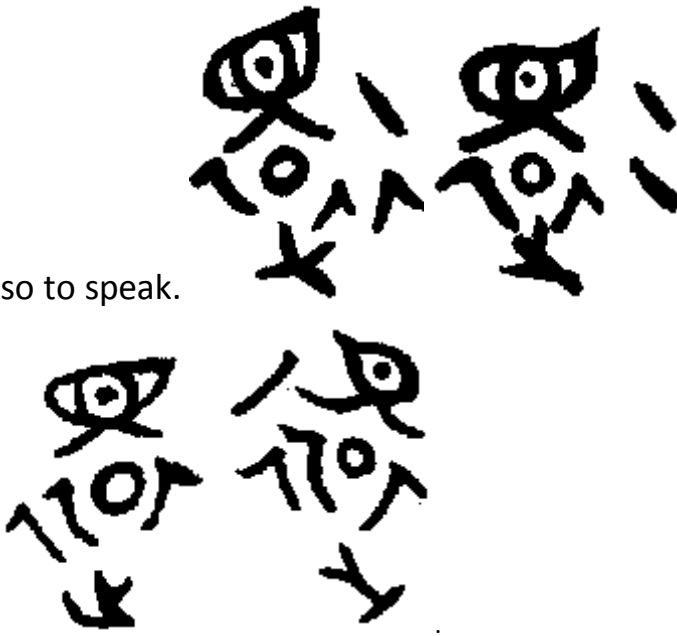
**back** . The ideograph is composed of the imagery of a person observing from above with a prominent eye, the component 辵 which indicates motion through the partial imagery of a foot on crossroads, and the



imagery of a veil or clothing 衣[yī]

suggesting a boundary of a region. As an ideographic interpretation: The idea of continued movement within a region – still, yet, and the idea of return, a watchful eye ensuring the laws of return are obeyed,

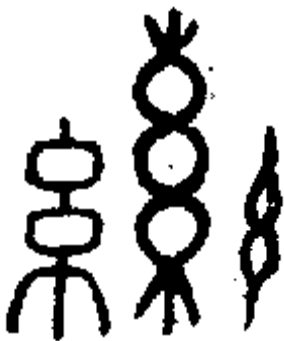
so to speak.



經

[jīng] Warp, scripture, longitude, channels

**in Chinese medicine, the sense of a regular flow, menstruation, etc.** The left side of the character is the image of a string 糸 [sī]; bundled silk threads, say the Shuo



Wen. . Likely the image of a string formed from intertwined silk threads tied at the ends. The

right side ䷛, the Shuo Wen ䷛ interprets as channels of water underneath the earth, with ䷀ representing the surface of the earth. These channels of circulation are of

importance in Chinese geomancy. ䷛ abstracted gives

rise to the lower portion of ䷛, says the Shuo Wen.

䷛ is a character, now written 壬 rén which depicts "a | carrying pole supported 一 in the middle part and having one object attached at each end, as always done in China," according to Karlgren. 任 rèn now suggests the 'carrying of a burden,' and 壬 represents the ninth of the ten heavenly stems (天干). To add to the confusion, another character which shows a person 人 standing on the ground 土 has come



to be written the exact same way as 王

𠩺 𠩻

but it occurs only as a component in other characters in present day usage, in 廷 tīng, 聽 tīng, 呈 chéng, etc., for instance.

𠩺 are “The underground water courses, so important in the Chinese geomancy 风水 fēngshuǐ. 水脉也, 从川在一下, 會意。一地也, 王声。” says Wieger. And Karlgren says, “川 stream under — the surface of the earth; below, the seal

𠩺

has not 工 but 王 tíng, the function of which is uncertain”.

It is quite likely that the seal variant Karlgren refers to is a corrupted form, and forms of 𠩺 that predate the Shuo Wen

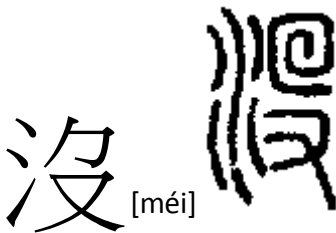
𠩺

and Seal forms by centuries include



. Some have interpreted 經 as the picture of the warp in a loom, while the Wenlin dictionary says the original meaning of 經 was "warp in a loom."

經, in essence, seems to refer to concepts where there is an unbroken flow, or a regular flow, of ideas ( scripture), the bodily channels in Chinese medicine, etc.

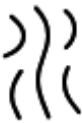




[méi] not [mò] sink; overflow;



disappear; drown; submerge. A hand



drops

something in water  , which disappears in a

whirl  .  , the Shuo Wen says is an ancient character depicting abysmal waters. Note that component 氵 is an abstract representation of the water 水 character; referred to sometimes as the three dot water, or 三點水 sān diǎn shuǐ.

 [tóng]  same, with;

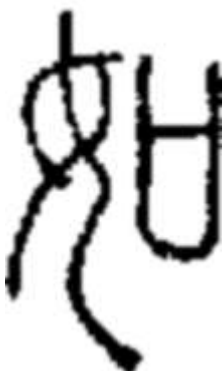
       , explains the Shuo Wen. "Picture of a cover, the lid (cf. 冂) of 冂 an opening: fit together," says Karlgren. Ancient forms include



is the picture of a cover, according to the Shuo

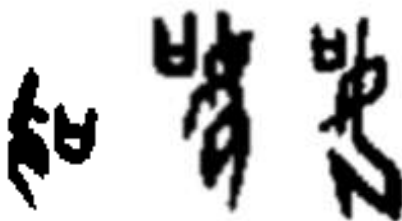
Wen



[rú]

**if, be like, according to.**

It's the nature of a woman 女 to follow commands given 口 [kǒu, mouth]. The sense conveyed by the character is 'following from, supposing, in accordance with, etc.' The sense of following along with, or being in conformance with



an expressed pattern.

她 [tā] **She, her.** The explanation given by the Welin

dictionary is deeply informative. Wenlin says the character is from 女 (nǚ, woman) and 也 (yě, also). The character 她 was once a variant of 姐 (jiě sister). In modern times, 她 was taken as a substitute for 他 tā (which was traditionally used to express 'he, she, it', etc), to express the sense 'she'. Two additional variants are found in usage for the word 他 tā: 牠, for animals, and 祂, for the divine.

麼 [me] 磨 A suffix particle for interrogatives

and adverbs. A modal particle. The top of the character is explained thus by Weiger, "Compare 屮 [mián, roof

屮 ] the hut. 屮 is half of a hut, a shed, a shop."



are bundles of hemp.



[má, an ideograph

now carrying the meaning hemp], are bundles of hemp

together under a roof, or in a room, being kept their for



treatment. 幺 is a "Picture of silk cocoons with threads," according to Karlgren and the image of a child taking form according to the Shuo Wen, which attributes to the character the meaning small 小.



Connected 亼 bundles that go under a roof - a particle that is used to form phrases [see analogy to a bundle], or connect together clauses [bundles of idea-units] in an expression[a building like structure].



**Rise, start, get up.** From 走 (zǒu,



go) and 己 (jǐ, self). 走 is the image of a person walking. The image of a foot, and a person walking briskly

with the head bent. On the right in ancient variants the component is not 己 but 巳 [sì, fetus], which according to Wieger is, "The figure of an embryo, a fetus. See 包 bāo. In the maternal womb, the child is 巳 or 包; at birth, 𠂔 or 𠂔; when swaddled, 子; when it begins to walk, 兒." The initial formative 巳 movement 走 - Rise, start, get up, etc.



己, according to Wenlin, "may have depicted thread on a loom; an ancient meaning was 'unravel threads', which was later written 紀 jì. 己 was borrowed both for the word jǐ 'self', and for the name of the sixth Heavenly Stem (天干)." 起 is then ideographically a thread being woven into in the fabric of reality, its journey 走 of falling into place in the fabric, start, formation, etc.



There apparently is a variant



of the character, found on a seal,



 [běn]

**Basis, foundation, origin;**

**volume [book];** The picture of a tree 木 [mù, tree









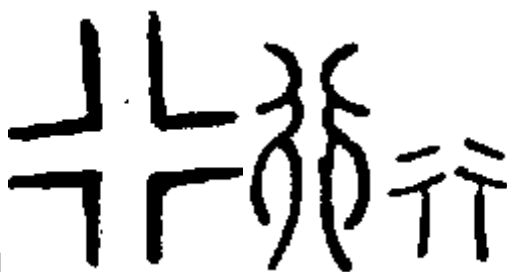
] with 一 indicating the



foundational portion.



[xíng]



Go,

**ok, alright, acceptable, do , travel** [háng] **line, colum, row, profession.** The picture of crossroads, ideographically conveying the sense of movement, travel, etc The meanings associated with the sound hang derives from an ordered pattern of movement – a row, column, a profession, etc.



**Heart, mind, feeling.** The imagery of a human heart. As a component in characters, the form is also

written 忄 and 小 . The dot in some ancient variants

may refer to the ‘center of the heart,’ or the center of the being, perhaps.

所 [suǒ] 所 所 所 Place,

**that which.** Picture of an axe hitting wood. The sound of axes chopping wood, says the Shuo Wen. 所 所, the wood is chopped, says the Shuo Wen:

𠩺 木 所 所

The imagery of an axe 斤

斤

in movement carving out a wooden door 戶[hù],

斤 𠩺 斤



door]

. 所 is thus,

ideographically, the place of activity, of change. Or, that by which change is being affected.



然<sub>[rán]</sub>


**Spontaneous change, right, correct** . The meat 肉

of a dog 犬 subject to 火 fire. 肉 has the ancient

forms , 犬[quǎn, dog] is an abstracted

image of a dog 

. The dog can symbolize a spontaneous nature.

火 is an abstracted form of 火 [huǒ, fire] 



] - the 四點火, or the 4 dot fire.


The character conveys an idea of spontaneous transformation, as dog meat 狀 undergoes in fire 火.

Combined with the character 自 [the imagery of a nose, which signifies ideographically self, nature, breath, etc.] 自然 conveys the meaning *nature [which is a perception of patterns of apparently spontaneous natural change]*. With the character 虫 [worm, the image of a thick worm], the word-phrase 虫然 means although – the hesitant dragged movement of a thick worm combined with the idea of spontaneous change. 忽然 has the meaning suddenly. 忽 is the image of a heart with the image of a moving flag over it – and the character has the meaning disregard, neglect, overlook. The character 燃 [rán], with an additional 火 [huǒ, fire] on the left, now indicates the meaning burn, roast, etc.



**事** [shì] **Thing, event; A**

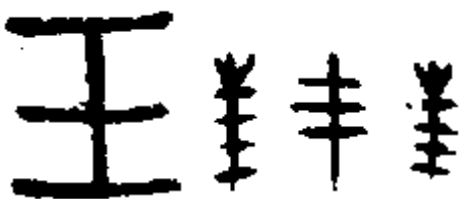
hand holding a stylus, writing something. The form may be thought of as a hand holding a stylus, writing on a surface. Or, a hand holding a stylus, capturing a creative expression - as indicated by the □ [kǒu] mouth in more ancient forms. There are other more esoteric interpretations. The triplicate, or dual evolution on the top of stylus may, so to speak, be interpreted as indicating a generative sense, the hand as that which is capable of actualizing a creative intent, etc. *A thing, an event, the creative expression actualized.*

**現** [xiàn] **Appear, display, present.** Composed

of 玉 (yù, 'jade' ) which is often abstracted to  when it occurs as a component in other characters, and 見 (jiàn, see). Ideographically, it conveys the sense - the manifested luster of a jade 玉 generating visual perception 見. "Lustre of a

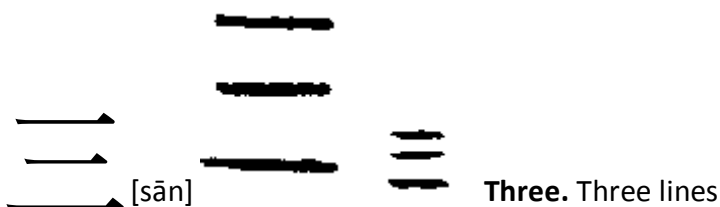
gem: conspicuous, become visible; actual, present, now," says Karlgren.

 is the picture of a person with a prominent eye. 玉 had the ancient forms

 and as a visual mnemonic: rings of jade on a vertical needle. 玉 is the beautiful emerging from stones, of five

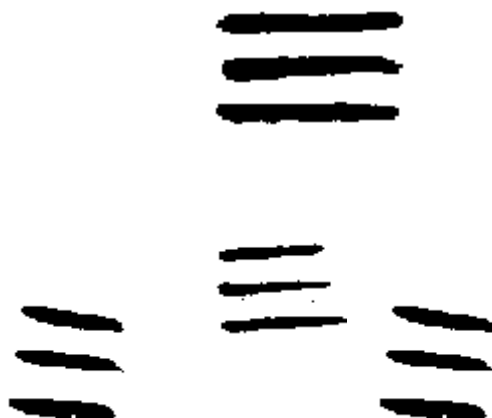
virtues , says the Shuo Wen – an expression which allows for multi-layered interpretations.





indicating the number 3.

數名天地人上道也      The number referring to the Way of Heaven, Earth, and Man, according to the Shuo Wen.

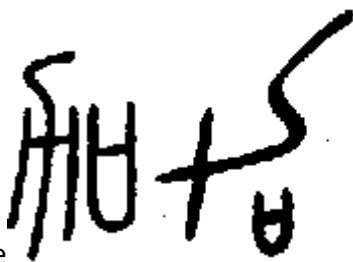


加 [jiā] **Add, increase, augment.** 力 (lì, strength)




is the image of a strongly muscled

arm, and 口 (kǒu, mouth) signified expression, creative expression, etc. "To add 力 the sinews to the 口 mouth, violence to persuasion; 从力, 从口, 會意。By extension, to add to, to increase, to insist, to inflict, etc.," says Wieger.



Ancient forms of 加 include , and



the variant  would have likely been used for related concepts.

  . Think, feel, consider.

Variants of the character found on seals include





, and




相 [xiāng] each other, mutual [xiàng] look at;

appearance; photo: A character explained by Karlgren as "An 目 eye, spying, looking out from behind a 木 tree." And Wieger says, "The abstract meaning of reciprocity...is said to come from a kind of pun, the two elements 木 and 目 both

being pronounced mù" The tree  is, in a sense,

symbolic of generated patterns, and the eye  is

that by which the patterns are perceived. 



' A variant of 相 has an ideographic form



added, as if to emphasize the dual pairing

nature of its



components

想, is, then, ideographically, to reflect 相 in the heart



- to think, feel, consider.

面 [miàn]   Face, surface,

**extend.** The picture of a human head, with the face



encircled. The more ancient forms appear as






. The character for head 首 [shǒu] had the

ancient forms    .

開 [kāi]  **Open.** The picture

of two hands removing a horizontal bolt from a door.  
In some variants are seen two hands pushing open

, the two door leaves , in others two people  
are seen pushing open the two leaves of a large door

 . Other variants include 



電

[diàn] **Lightning; Electricity.** The character

has 雨



(yǔ, rain) on the

above part, which capture rain drops with the dome of the  
skies in the background. And on the half below is 申(shēn,  
stretch out, state, express ) explained by Karlgren ,based on  
seal forms, as “Two hands stretching something | long,

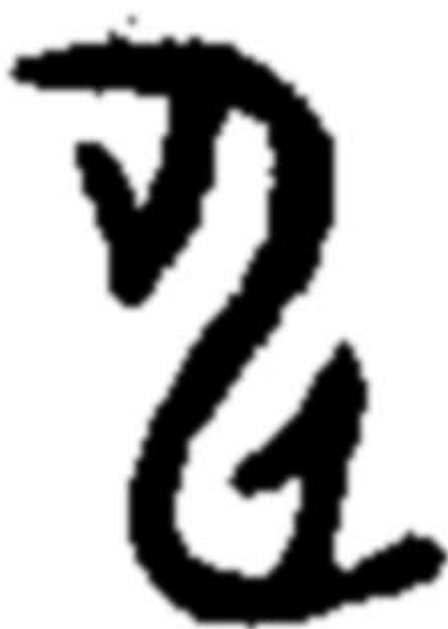


” and whose most ancient

forms show what seem to be two alternatively expanding



forces in nature



種

[zhǒng]

精



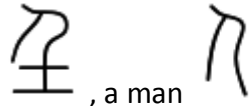
Kind,

**seed, strain, species in biology. [zhòng] to plant; cultivate** On the left hand side of the character is 禾

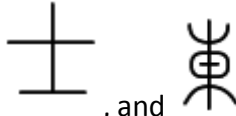


(hé, grain, seed) signifying the idea of a category.

重 [zhòng, heavy, of importance] is from 𠂔, a man



standing on earth 士, and 東 [東, dōng] the character currently attributed the meaning East, which shows



the Sun behind a tree



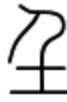
, as the Shuo Wen says.

東 may ideographically be interpreted as an actively

manifested 日 pattern 木. A man's perception of it from



his standpoint on earth 𠂔. The perception of manifested matter, by extension weight, the amount of matter associated with a perceived thing, etc. 種 is thus the kinds 禾 of



actively manifested 日 pattern 木 as experienced from the point of view of a man in his position amongst things - on





earth . The meanings [zhòng] to plant; cultivate  
cultivate derives from an alternate interpretation of the same  
ideographic elements, as if they were being interpreted in  
a different grammatical frame. Patterns made

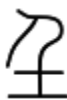


manifest

, from seeds



sown in the ground by



man .

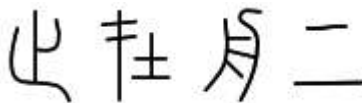
前

[qián]



. Before, front, formerly, ago,

former, preceding .



, the

image of a foot 止 [zhǐ, the image of a foot, current meanings

include stop, stay, detain, etc.]



on a boat 舟 [zhōu]



, says the Shuo Wen. "Prow

of a boat," says Karlgren. As a visual mnemonic: A man

standing with his leg on the prow of a boat .That which is encountered or was formerly encountered, or was passed by in a journey on a boat – we may suppose that that which was

encountered had a restraining 止 effect, according to its nature, on the journey of the boat





[dāng]



Indicating a similar value,

**or similar worth.** The upper part is the ideograph 尚[shàng], which has the meaning esteem, noble, lofty, etc., and which is the “picture of the top, the ridge of a house,”



according to Karlgren. . Likely, as suggested by the



ancient forms , 尚 was a pictographic depiction of the ridge pole on the roof of a house, which dispels 风 the wind. – conveying the senses lofty, superior, high, noble. Note that ancient ideographic images of a house



were often the imagery of a building with an open window.

The lower part of 當 is 田 [tián] meaning field. Things that may be categorized as belonging to a field, an active region 田 in terms of their value, estimability, or worth 尚. “The fundamental sense of 當 is 'value',” says Karlgren. “A 田 field is valuable property. 尚 'superior' also suggests the meaning,”



notes the Wenlin dictionary. , says the Shuo Wen – suggesting in its explanation, the sense in “a field of similar worth.”



# 美

[měi] **Beauty. Beautiful.** From 羊



[yang, sheep] over 大 [dà,

'big']. Shuo Wen gives the form








for Sheep 羊, and says




it depicts the horns, the four feet, and the tail. The Sheep is associated with Goodness in many cultures, as it tends to be meek, its form and behavior [calm, placid, it tends to fall into an ordering in a group, etc.] conveys a sense of

calm ordering. Beauty here is understood as an

expansive  good ordering .

  
 [èr]  **Two**. The number of Earth, from pair

of , says the Shuo Wen

 . Two lines, indicating the numeral 2.

外 [wài]

夕卜

卜

**Outside.** “卜 divination by 夕 the moon: outdoors,” says Karlgren. Perhaps, in the early dawn by the moonlight, or by examining the phase of the moon as well was the divination ritual done. Observing the moon, for divination purposes, perhaps –and this likely had to be done *outdoors*.

道

[dào]



Way, path, reason,

**principle.** The ancient form was the image of a head and a foot on the image of a path



從 [cóng]



**From.** Ideographically, two people following each other on a street. Connected movement. Change in a person's position influenced by another. From. The components are the image of a path, the image of two people on it, and the image of a feet, which here may be thought of as conveying an idea of movement

動

[dòng] **Move** .From 重



[zhòng, heavy] and

力

[lì, strength]. “重 'weight' also suggests the idea of momentum,” says Wenlin. The perception of what is generated when strength 力 is applied to an expressed mass 重. An Oracle bone variant expresses the same idea in an



interesting way , the movement[suggested by the imagery of the path and the foot] of that which is a



manifested physical matter-pattern . Seal form



variants include which has a variant of 重 [zhòng,



heavy] - apparently interpreting which Wieger writes, “The ancient characters [representing 重] represent round or flat weights piled up on a kind of support.”

看 [kàn] 看 看

See, look at, watch,

**read.** The ideograph shows a hand above the eye. One

keeps the hand 手



above the eye 目



(depicted horizontally, in many ideographs) to gather the rays and see better, says a traditional source.

業 業

業 [yè]

line of business; trade; industry;

karma; deed; action; etc. "A 木 tree crowded with its 𣎵



foliage. The moral foliage, the deeds of a man, the affairs upon which he exerts his activity, and what he acquires by his



doings, viz. merits, goods, titles, etc," says Wieger.



An ancient variant, apparently found on a metal



artifact, has the form


高 [gāo]  high, tall. The picture of a tower.

Described as 'sublime,' by the Shuo Wen.

崇也象臺觀高之形也口齊倉舍同意





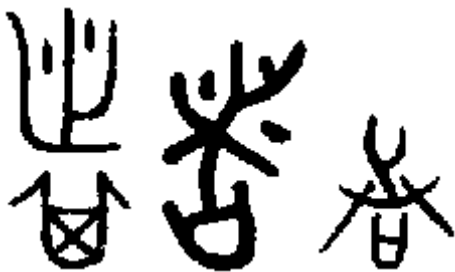

 者 [zhě] One who, as the English "-er."

作者 [zuò zhě], for instance, means author.

The sense conveyed by the character is *'of the nature.'* The imagery of an incense burning, which makes the substance's nature manifest in the process. The nature of work of a person, what he manifests in the lived process of life. Ancient

variants include





The ancient forms vary, depicting in the lower half what seems a vessel, a basket, an incense burner, the picture of a mouth, a nose, etc. These are analogous to the incense burner in that the nose or the mouth emanate the breath, which is animated by the vital heat, and which, in turn, is generated by combustion within the human system.



“Word differentiating jobs ,” says a literal translation of the Shuo Wen explanation. The dictionary

attributes the structure of the character to



( zì, self,



picture of a nose) and above it . The Shuo Wen says



is phonetic . It is described by the dictionary as an ancient character from which 旅 derives. 旅[lǚ] today has the meaning ‘travel.’



may be thought of as the picture of two people and a feet, emphasizing the idea of a *journey*.



者 is then the path or a journey taken by the



self ; what a person does, the self of a person or a thing manifesting its nature.

The sound zhě, resembles the sound of a substance burning.



The Character 煮 [zhǔ, boil, cook], is 者 modified with the image of fire 火 [huǒ, fire, which is often abstracted when it occurs as a component in characters to 灬 - the four dot fire or the 四點火 sìdiǎnhuǒ ] underneath.



 [fǎ] Law, way , method, mode,

**dharma.** The picture of a man, a crucible, and water – the idea of transformation.

Shuo Wen says the character derives from the abstraction of an ancient form which has the added imagery of a celestial



deer or a celestial elk . The character is described by the Shuo Wen, as:




















The restrain mechanisms which define how the flow of reality happens, in a sense. The perception of things higher, movement in celestial patterns of flow.












, says the Shuo Wen – implying the imagery of the celestial deer conveys the sense

“That which can’t be directly touched,” if we are to go by the surface meaning the dictionary’s explanation conveys. 去(qù,



go ) here, perhaps, contributes to the sense



“following the celestial deer a,” or, perhaps, refers to the idea of change or transformation.

Ideographs allow for levels of interpretation, even the meaning of a single symbol like “water” varies much, and depends on the plane of interpretation. Amongst the ancient Chinese, Egyptians, the Mayans, in certain Greek philosophies, the Babylonian creation myths, ‘water,’ a primordial watery abyss, etc., appears as the first material of creation.

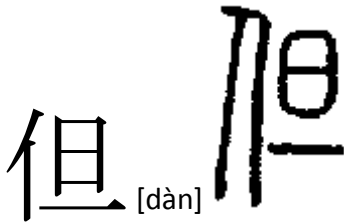
As a mnemonic: 去 to go, with the flow 彳 of nature.



Remember, 氵 is the 三點水 sāndiǎnshuǐ; an abstracted form



of the character for water 水, referred to as the three dot water.



**But, yet, still, nevertheless.**

Imagery of a man witnessing the dawn, a newly risen sun,  
witnessing change, an alternative pattern, etc.


其 [qí] 異 its; used for reasons of euphony

or as an empty suffix in expansion of one-syllable component to a two-syllable component; his; her; its; their; he; she; it; that; such.

The ancient form was the image of a basket, according to the

Shuo Wen, which says  the













character is a Zhou Dynasty variant of 箕 (now attributed the pronunciation and meanings: jī, dustpan, winnowing basket, and different from 其 in that it has the

abstracted ideogram for bamboo twigs 竹  on top ).

The lower half of the Shuo Wen form of the character 其



, is 𠂔 [jī], the ideographic representation of a foundational structure, purportedly.




Here, it perhaps serves to show the basket resting on a stand.

The character 其 refines the senses of the word it modifies. The way a winnow acts to refine things that pass through it. The phrase 其實[qíshí, as a matter of fact; actually; in fact], for instance, refines the sense of 實[shí, true, real], or rather refines the sentence or thought-expression with the energy-sieve of the word 實. When used as a pronoun, the particle may be thought of as acting to refine out the thing which is being referred to, retaining it alone in the winnow of thought. The sounds of the characters 其, and 箕 resemble the sounds a traditional winnowing pan makes.



A related character is 簸[bǒ] which has the attributed meaning *to winnow*, according to the Shuo Wen,

and likely depicts the act of winnowing. “The fundamental meaning is bǒ (verb) ‘to winnow with a fan,’ bò (noun) ‘winnowing fan.’ To winnow grain means to separate and remove the chaff from it, by means of wind which is produced by fanning,” says Wenlin. An interesting ideograph, said to

be a Seal variant of 簸 is  .

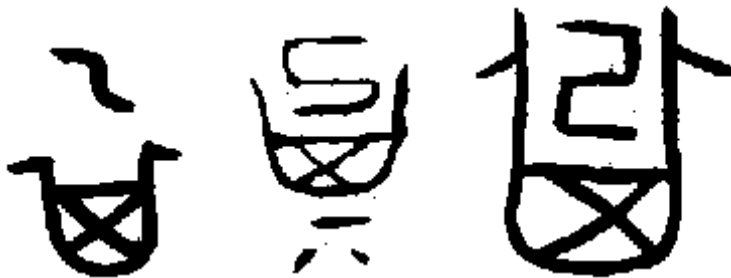
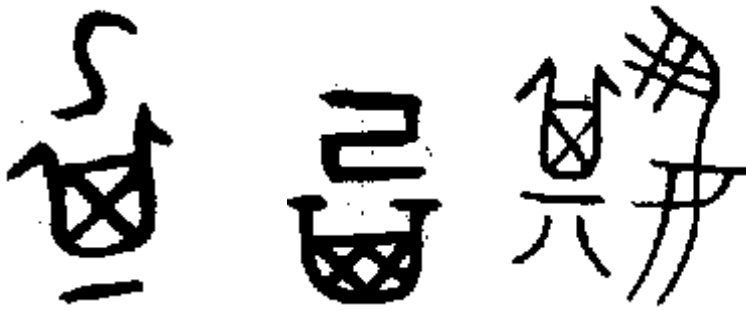
Ancient forms of 其 include:



其 其 其

其 其 其

其 其 其



理

[17] Principle, reason, logic, doctrine, govern,

**an ordering.** The idea of a beautiful ordering is conveyed



by the left half of the character 玉 (yù, Jade). The right



hand side is 里 (lǐ, place, region). An ordering 玉 applied to a region 里. Reason, theory, logic, etc. The ancient meaning of the character was to polish gems, the physical act of which, perhaps, is not too different from the process of reasoning out an ordering. "Polish gems according to the veins; dispose, regulate, manage, govern; rules, law; principle, doctrine, reason; reasonable, right," says Karlgren.

This is but an ideographic sense of the character. The form or



symbol, , in itself, for instance, can convey ideas as divergent and deep in its symbolism, as, say, the Celtic Cross in its symbolism does convey. René Guénon has an entire volume devoted to the symbolism of the cross, which, in the author's opinion, only but touches upon a particular

aspect of it. The cross, as the swastika does, predates the founding of all of today's religions.

些

[xiē] **Some, these, a measure word**

**indicating a small quantity.** From 此(cǐ, this) and 二(èr,

此

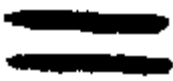
'two').



is the picture of a feet, and a person turning

此

around. The right hand component of 此, 匕, here derives from the image of a person turned to the right. In other cases, as we shall see, the form 匕 may derive from the image of a person turning, a person turned around, the image of a spoon, etc. 此(cǐ, this) may ideographically be interpreted as a person stopping 止[zhǐ, stop] and turning 匕 as if to pay attention to a thing observed – this.



此(cǐ, this ) pluralized by adding 二 (èr)  'two'  
gives 些(xiē, these).

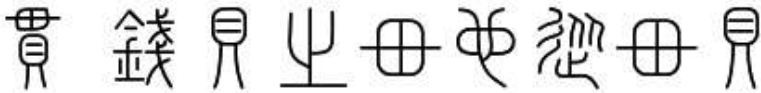
實 [shí]  

True,  
real, solid, full, substantial, practical. The lower



portion of the character is 貫[guàn, is now attributed meanings as - a thread for stringing holed copper coins, to thread together, pass through, penetrate, to cross], a form interpreted as a string of cowries. A stash of cash, for cowries were used as currency in ancient China. The character is defined in a similar sense by the Shuo Wen:



In certain ancient variants, the character is clearly the image



of several cowries with a connecting string . In some variants, it shows coins with a hole in the



center , and a string connecting, passing through them.

An examination of other ancient variants suggest that what is

now written 貫 , might as well have been, or must have been ideographically cognate to the image of an alchemical crucible



with the character for field above it

Imagery of an alchemical vessel has sometimes been as



among other



variants. And on






鼎 [dǐng, cauldron]



Lindqvist writes, "From being a cooking vessel for ordinary



people, it became a revered sacrificial vessel and a symbol of the power of the state. The largest ding yet found weighs 226 kilos."

The upper portion of the character was the image of a roof 宀


[mián]. Money

underneath the roof


– real, substantial. The active field of transformation


generated by an alchemical vessel



, under a roof

– real, substantial,

actively generating change.

實 富 也 巡 門 貫 貫 齋 貨 物

只 [zhǐ] 只 只 **Only, merely.** From 口

[kǒu, mouth] and 八 [bā, eight] indicating division. 八 indicates the breath expanding downwards says, the Shuo Wen. The emitted word, the expressed creative idea in its primal state where it undergoes its first manifolding division

八. Variants of the form include 𠂆 and 𠂇. The initial state of an energy system's evolution, where the myriadization occurs, a state of simplicity.



隻 [zhī]

A measure word for animals, vessels, one of a pair, etc. The image of a bird 隹 [zhuī,



image of a bird with short tail]

held in the



hand

又. Indicates also one among a pair of things as opposed to 雙 (pair, twin, double, image of two birds in a



hand)



老 耆 耄


[lǎo]


Old, venerable, aged,

of long standing, always. The image of a



  
 man's hair 𠂔 turning 𠂔 grey.


 毛 [máo, hair, feather, wool, down] is a pictograph

conveying the senses hair, fur, etc. 𠂔 , the  
 image of a person turning is used to convey the sense,  
 change, turn, transform. Ancient forms and their variants



include



[cháng]






Long, lasting, steadily,


**regularly. [zhǎng] Grow up, chief, head, increase.**


Said by the Shuo Wen to be composed of three parts.







 ,  . The  is defined as a tall plateau. A tall structure with a level surface.

 高而二 𠂔 𠂔 一 𠂔 二

 a man turning around, signifies the idea of

transformation. And  the idea of disappearance into a horizon.

 is turned upside down to indicate the disappearance as the structure  progresses  upwards.

Remember  is from 入(rù, enter) and 乚 ( where the heavens, or the skies, as indicated by the vertical, meet the

earth, as indicated by the horizontal)- to enter into the horizon, to disappear.



The most ancient forms of 長,



has been interpreted as the imagery of a man with long hair, tied by a brooch.



**Notes:** The lower portion of the character



is which the Shuo Wen says is an ancient variant for the character for man. One is reminded of the use of the




imagery of a man in 大 [dà, big, high , tall,





vast, immense] and in 天 [tiān, heaven, sky].





Searching for cues to ideographic notions behind we

find, for instance, a seal variant of 大, . This might be a corruption, but gives hints to associations in the ancient Chinese psyche.

In the myths of many cultures, including tribes, mountains take on an anthropomorphic significance.

Seal variants of  [ 兀, wù, towering] include 


and  amongst them. They have on their left the

imagery of a mountain  and a terraced mount



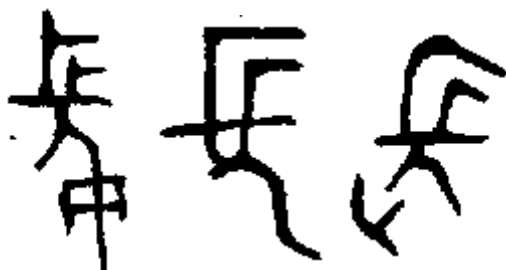
respectively. The right hand side of both the characters is a form which indicates the flow of 气 (qì, air, vapor, a kind of energy ).

Karlgren attributes the meanings “Tabouret, stool; cut off the

feet; immovable, steady, determined," to .

Variants of 長 :





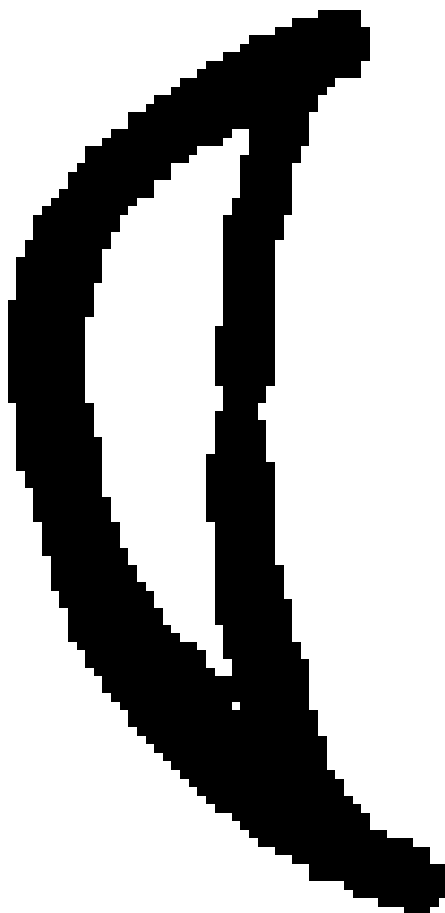
**Moon, Month.** A pictographic depiction of the moon. Lunar months were apparently a way to keep time

in ancient China.  The most common pictographic



variant in ancient times, seems to have been:



.





與   [Yǔ] **And, together with.**




[Yù] **Participate.** The character  is composed of the

image of two pairs of hands , and , a spoon with something contained, according to the Shuo Wen.

Variants show an interlocked structure in the middle

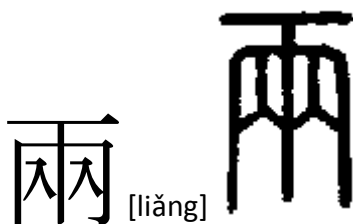




In them, the central form resembles



(牙 [yá], tooth) . The "Picture of a molar," for Karlgren and the imagery of two teeth above and below grinding against each other, for Shuo Wen.




Two, double, both, either, a

**measure of 50 gm., ounce, tael.** "Picture of a balance, two arms with a weight on each," says Karlgren. Old variants


include



政 [zhèng] Government, politics,  
political.



From 正 (zhèng right, righteous, rectify) and 攴 (pū, strike, beat, tap). Ideographically conveying the sense 'to



govern.’ The idea of action here is conveyed by the 攴. 攴



is sometimes used to represent an action involving force, as perhaps was the nature of government during certain ancient dynasties. The hand is often symbolic of



action. 攴 is a seal variant of 攴 (pū, abstracted to 攴



in characters) which has the image of a hand 手 [shǒu, a hand drawn with five fingers] on the left, and 卜



[bǔ, foretell, predict] which is phonetic and at the same time signfic of an evolution emanating from the central, animating, world-axis; an action which actualizes.



Ancient variants include  
which will be better understood as we study variants of 正



which include



which may suggest

conformance, or restraint imposed by a Heavenly hierarchy,

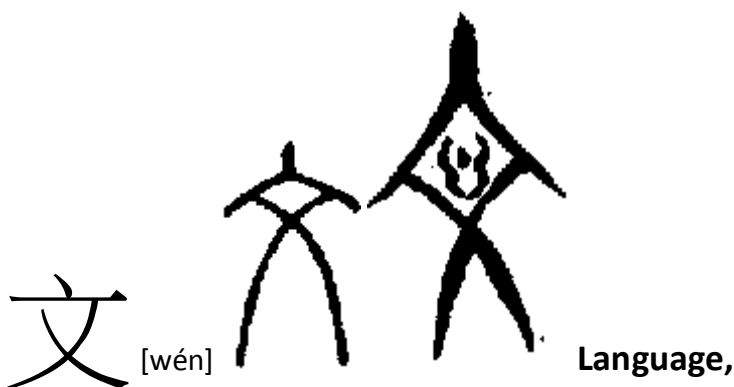


and



both of which suggest the restraint of

ordering principles.



### **literature, writing, script, culture.**

A man with his heart marked prominent. Learning, education, culture, etc., are of the heart. The man is likely sitting cross legged, as scholars often did in ancient China.

錯畫也象文尺文止屬皆從文  
 , says the Shuo Wen.

Karlgren and Lindqvist both are of the opinion that the ideogram originally represented a person with a tattoo on his chest. 花紋 has the meaning decorative patterns, tattoo, etc. 文身, Wenlin says, is a literary word for 'tattoo.' The dictionary also maintains that the word 文 wén "formerly meant 'lines', 'veins', 'wood-grain.'"



An analogous form, 交[jiāo, join, connect] 𠂔 is explained such by the

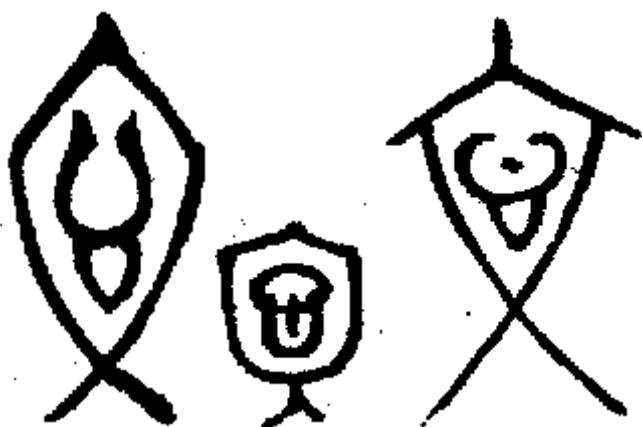
ShuoWen:

亥 亥 脛 屯 巡 大 象 亥 形 尸 亥 止 屬 皆 巡 亥

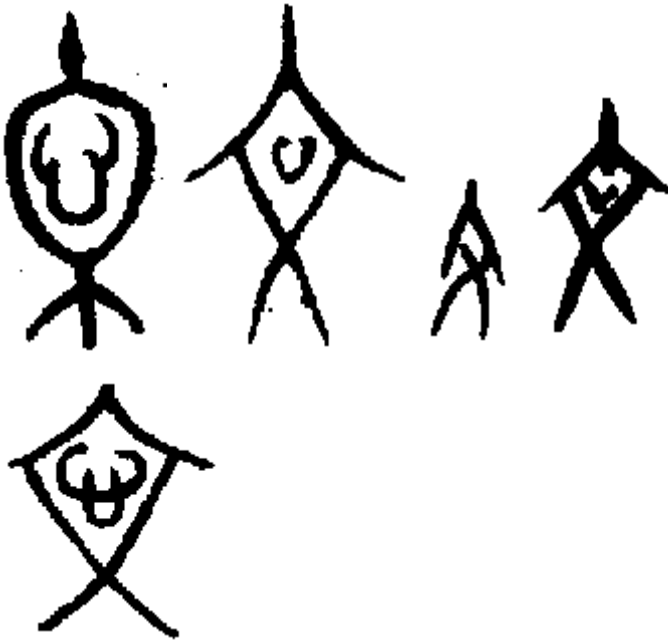
The image of a person sitting crosslegged. “To cross, interlock; join, jointly; communicate, intercourse, friendship; hand over,



deliver," says Karlgren explaining 交







部 𡈼

[bù] Part, section, troops in the

**military.** From 𡈼 (pǒu) which is attributed the meaning *to say no, to spit out, etc.* and 邑 (yì) city.

音 appears as  in its ancient forms.



否 [fǒu, no] seems a closely related word, with



不 (bù, no) and 口 (kǒu, mouth). has an additional dot 丶 on the top. A variant of 音 shows a man spitting out



into a vessel. The idea of refusal of a notion, negation.

A kind of spitting out, saying no and refusing to accept. 丶 can add the idea of emphasis, a densified idea-seed. Or it

might as well have been from an abstraction of the character for above which is found on certain ancient forms, considered



variants of 否

. 上 [shàng, above] has had the



ancient variants



Harsh commands

keeping a troop in conformance

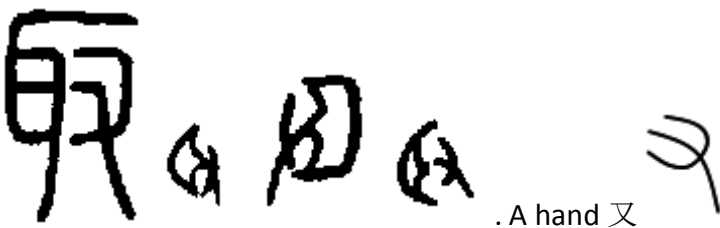


. Remember that 邑 city, abstracted to 卩, is the imagery of a person bowing or kneeling conformant to the

bounding laws of the city, indicated by a walled structure above him, and in certain rare variants, around him



The lower portion of the character is 取 [qǔ, take, get, fetch]



Shuo Wen points out that in ancient times there was a practice of cutting off and presenting the enemy's left year as



proof of battle service. , says the



Shuo Wen, describing 取 . To catch and pick up, interpreting the surface meaning Shuo Wen attributes.



The top portion of the character is 冃[mào, hat] , the image of a headdress. The two lines are decorations, according to the Shuo Wen. They may as well suggest a hierarchy, being related in form to the ancient Chinese





character for 'above.'





. To violently pick



up, says the Shuo Wen. , the form Shuo Wen uses to describe the sense 'violent' is composed of the picture of a

 , and,  , the picture of a sprout. To violently attack what is tender. The bloom or sprout also signifies potential of a profound nature, according to an extend sense explanations in the Shuo Wen convey.

As a mnemonic, that which has been taken 取 to the top 冂 – highest, most.


Variants of the character include  



 [yàng] **Appearance, shape, form, model.** From

木(mù, wood) which suggests the sense ‘pattern,’and 𣎵 [yàng] which is, ideographically, calmly flowing channels of water. 羊 is the image of a sheep, suggestive of ordering, goodness, calmness, etc. 永[yǒng, always, perpetually,forever], is described by the Shuo Wen as

channels of water extending, symbolic of the principle patters along which a water stream expands. The flows of energy in nature which gives rise to forms - and hence, appearance, shape, form. As a visual mnemonic, a sheep 羊 drinking water in a stream 永 that runs through the woods 木- a beautiful scenery, by extension - appearance.

意 [yì]  Meaning, idea, will .

“The 音 sound in the 心 heart,” says Karlgren.

The component on the top is 音  [yīn, sound], for which the Shuo Wen offers a similar explanation,

saying it is the  - “the sound born from the heart.”



音

suggests sound, musical tones, sound as



generated by a musical instrument, etc.

is



, translated,



from

holding



.



An expression of intent

言[yán, words], as it stands in a

whole form



, or a harmonious form; when the

explanation of Shuo Wen is subjected to an ideographic

interpretation. Note also that the character for 甘[gān, sweet ]



has the ancient forms



The lower half of 意 is the imagery of a heart 心



[xīn] . Meaning, idea, will, etc., are perceived

initially as a sound or music



emanating from the

heart 心 . An expression of intent from the

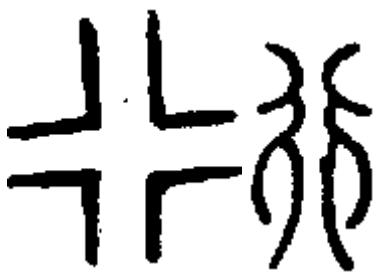
heart 心 .

進 [jìn] 進 進 Go forward,  
advance, enter.

Image of a short-tailed bird 隹 [zhuī], and the component 辵 [chuò, go], which indicates movement. As an ideographic association: A bird 隹 in flight moves 辵 *forward*.

很 [hě] 很 **Very.** The component on the left

is 彳 [chì, now attributed the meaning ‘footstep’], which is a form abstracted from the imagery of the half of a crossroads



, 行, which later came to be interpreted as two footsteps 彳 and 亍.

On the right side is the imagery of a person staring with a big



eye, . Said by the Shuo Wen to be

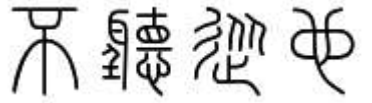


cognate to 很 itself, 艮 has the meanings tough, straightforward, blunt, hard to chew, etc., 艮 is the name of

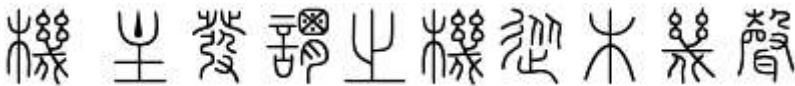
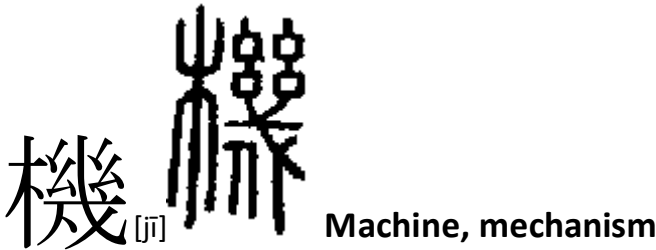
the trigram and hexagram “Keeping Still, Mountain.



艮 is an indolent person, a stupid person, a person staring, an extremely perceptive and rooted individual, say varying interpretations. Such a person stays his course 彳. An intensifier 艮 of the idea movement 彳 – the sense *very*.



很 as per the Shuo Wen, means  
a surface translation of which would be “not listening and following.”



The name of the principal expansion driver, according to the Shuo Wen.

From 木, wood, indicating a pattern, and here a framework and 幾 [jǐ] a character which may be interpreted, ideographically, as a formation of hidden guard-troops.



In explaining 幾, the Shuo Wen says, it is from 幺 [which in turn is from two 幺 (yāo, the image of cocoons connected by threads, attributed the meaning 'small') combined 二 幺], and 戌, which is a

garrison, and the image of a person and a weapon 戌 - armed guards, according to the Shuo Wen. 幺 may here indicate a connectedness between units, an intricate connected formation, etc.




To 幾 [jǐ], Shuo Wen attributes the meaning [微, wēi, which now has the meaning tiny, micro, abstruse, subtle]. 微


in turn is described by the ancient dictionary as 隱 行 [隱 行] or hidden movement. The stealth formation and

movement of troops, or guards. 幾 in the modern usage has become an ideograph conveying the senses “how many; a few; some, several; etc.”


A framework 木 and its hidden movement mechanisms 幾. In ancient times, the framework of machinery may have often been made of wood 木.

公 [gōng] **Public** . 

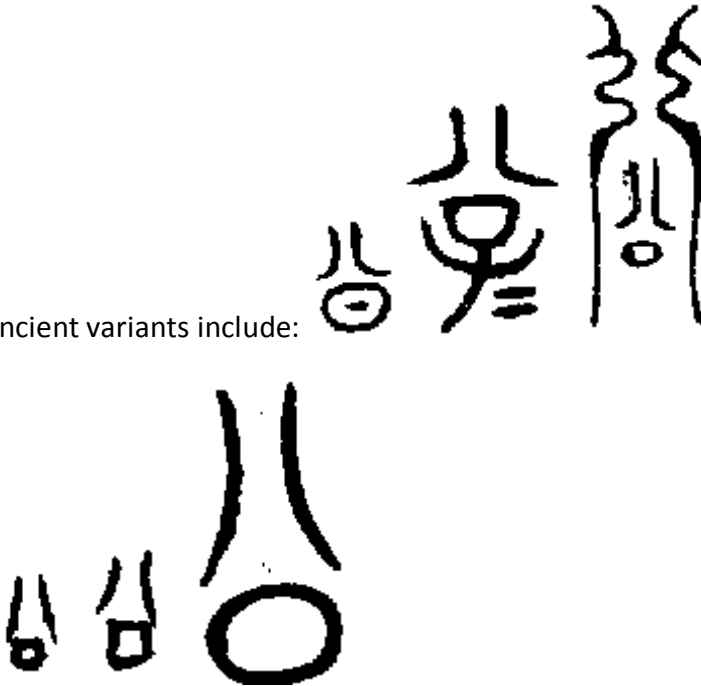
 "The scholastic interpretation is: the right 八 division of 厶 private things,"

says Karlgren. 厶 [sī]  is a character attributed the meaning private, and a component in

私 [sī, personal]. There are various theories on the origins of 厶 - one which says it is an abstract form conveying a sense of cocooned-ness; and another says it derives from the form of a

cocoon. The Shuo Wen form of the character  suggests that by the time dictionary was written, the form was probably understood as a cocoon. 八 [bā, eight] conveys the sense 'to divide.'

Ancient variants include:










把 [bǎ]  Grasp, hold; handle; a

measure word for things with handles, for handfuls;  
for indicating the object which is acted upon by the  
verb.



From 手 shǒu, hand, symbolizing action and 巴 [bā]  
which the Shuo Wen says is phonetic,





      





 is

A kind of insect or reptile which resembles a snake in its form.  
Once consumed as food, perhaps, as the snake has been in  
certain parts of China.



Ancient forms of  include   

  , etc. The most ancient forms  , etc., seem either to be the image of a person raking the ground, or grasping something on the ground, etc.

A seal variant of 把 is  - perhaps a corrupted form.



As a mnemonic, the act 手 of grasping



a snake-like reptile from the earth.



[yòu]



**and; again; both.** The image of a

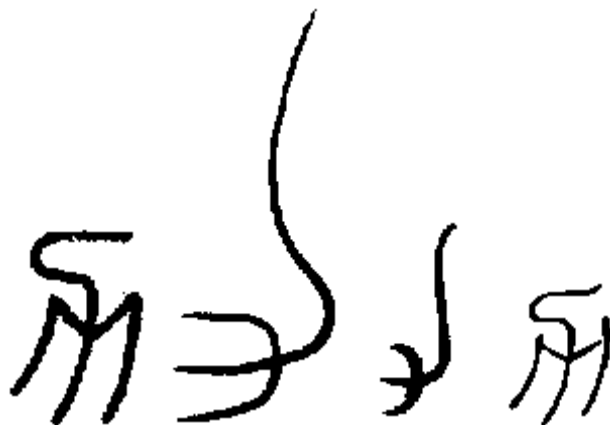
hand. The ideographic sense which conveys the attributed meanings seem to be “also in hand is.”



力

[lì] **Force, physical strength.** The image of a

strongly muscled male arm, exerting force.



全

[quán]

全

**Whole, entire, total,**

**perfect, entirely.**

全 篆 齊 全 𠂔 王 純 王 𠂔 全


From 入[rù, enter]   and 玉(yù, jade)

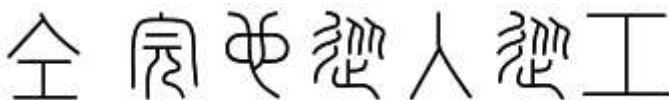


To enter 入 a state of perfection 玉, or a piece of jade worked to perfection, the idea of completion.

The Shuo Wen says the character is a seal calligraphy version



of an older character 全  [tóng]. The current meanings of the character being harmony, concord, be the same as, similar, etc. In modern usage, it is considered cognate to 同[tóng, same, similar with]. Shuo Wen however says that 全 signifies completion,



and is from 入[rù, enter] and 工[gōng, work] which signifies work and is the image of a carpenter's square, according to traditional ideas. A carpenter's square is a tool to measure the perfection of a construct, or to calibrate it to a perfection; and is at the core of the concepts of some western ideologies as that of the Freemasons.

Karlgren says the ancient pronunciation of 全 would have been in ancient times as dz'jwan, dz'jwän, ts'üan, etc., and attributes to it the meaning 'complete; preserve.'

點 [diǎn] 點 Dot, a bit.

點 灬 灬 灬 灬 灬 灬 灬 灬


Shuo Wen says the character refers to small particles of soot.



The component on the left 黑[hēi, black] is given by Shuo Wen, the sense:

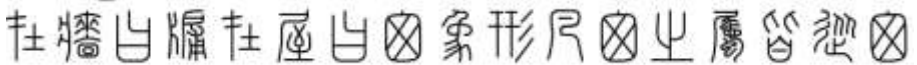


The color of the northern side, the color of that which is emanated by fire; that which emanates from fire and emits through the window. The lower portion of the character was 炎 [yán, burning hot]. 炎 is 火 [huǒ, fire] doubled. The upper

portion  is said to be the image of window on a room.



It is an ancient variant of a character [囟, cōng, now attributed the meanings 'chimney, vent, window, etc'] which is described such by the Shuo Wen:



When on a wall it is called 牖[yǒu, window], and when

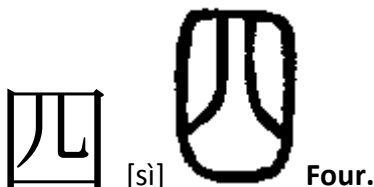


on a room, it is called [cōng].

黑 has the meanings black, dark, etc., in current usage.

On the right side of 點 is 占 [zhān, fortune telling; zhàn, occupy, posses, constitute] which is phonetic, according to the Shuo Wen. From 卜 [bǔ, cracks formed on tortise shells subject to heat during a divination ritual] and 口 [kǒu, mouth] interpreting those patterns. “To 口 interpret 卜 prognostics,” says Karlgren. From a purely ideographic standpoint, here the 口 and 卜 together does convey the sense, the expressed 口 evolving and coming to being 卜.

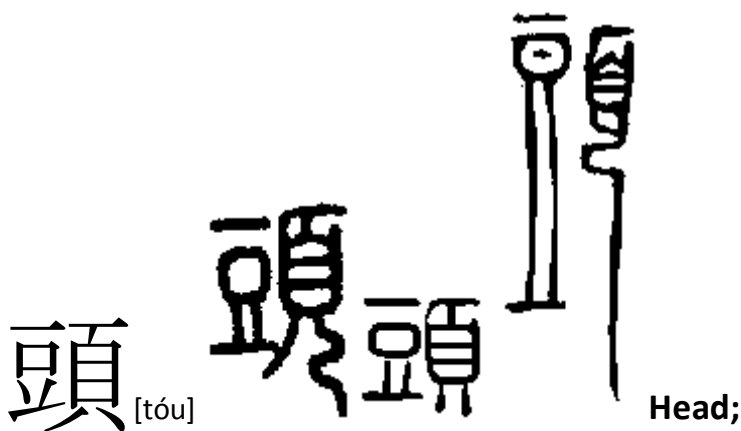
點 is that which evolves out 占 at a fireplace window 黑 – specs of soot and dust – dots, by extension.






In certain schools of Chinese thought, the odd numbers are considered Yang and the even numbers Yin. Yin number, says the Shuo Wen describing 四, four. The form, Shuo Wen holds, depicts a division into four quarters or four parts.













 頭 [tóu]      Head;

**first.** On the left 豆[dòu] is the image of a vessel, one from which meat was eaten, according to the Shuo Wen! Here it plays a phonetic role as well. And on the right is the image of

a head  above , an ancient variant form for  
 the character  (人, rén, man, person).











頭 目 也 巡 見 立 聲


已 [yǐ]

**Already.** " 𠄎 a symbol the

analysis of which is uncertain, but which is said to indicate an exhalation, an outcry (and serves in this sense e.g. in 牟 móu): hough! voila! it's finished!," says Karlgren.

𠄎

It is thought that 𠄎 evolved later with the ideogram for man 人 added to become 以


 yǐ[ , in order to, using, so as to] as well

as to 巳[yǐ, already]. Shuo Wen says .



indicates use. Some sources say it is the mouth in exhalation, generating the creative breath. Others say it is a fetus turned upside down. The fetus coming to birth can indicate the senses ‘*already* formed,’ ‘coming to serve a purpose of,’ etc. – which are meanings seen attributed to the varied forms which have apparently derived from the same

ancient form .

己 用 屯 變 反 乙 賈 情 中 謀 己 意 乙 實 屯 象 形

己

Wieger's explanation for 己 is "This very ancient character is supposed to represent the exhalation of the breath, the virtue that emanates from any object, its action, its use. By extension, use till exhaustion, to terminate."

Note that the character is different from 己 [jǐ, self].



**Cause, reason, because.** As a visual mnemonic, a man lying on a bed – that on which a man rests his argument - The reason. From 囗[wéi, surround], and 大[dà, big], according to the Shuo Wen, which attributes to

the character the meaning 就[jiù, simply, right away, with regard to].

因 就 也 從 口 大

等 [děng] 等 Category, class, and so on,

wait, a pattern , etc., continuation in a pattern.

寸

Restrained 寸 [ cùn , now conveys the sense  
'measurement' and is thought to be a measurement

associated with the hand or the thumb] evolution

卄



[zhī, 之, the imagery of a plant growing or a feet



stepping forth from a line] in a pattern 竹  
[ zhú, bamboo twigs].

寺[sì, now attributed the meaning 'temple' or 'monastery', a



sense we shall explore in further detail later]



is explained thus by Karlgren: "From 寸 hand (in the 'thumb' variation) signific and 之 zhī phonetic, here distorted into 土."

問 [wèn, ask] 問 問 Inquire, ask, a

**question.** To speak 口 [kǒu, mouth] 口 at the door 門

問 [mén]. An expression 門 門, seeking, made at

a door 門 . 門 [mén, door] is phonetic, according to the Shuo Wen.

新 [xīn] 新 New. On the left is 亲 [qīn] a

character which originally meant 'hazel-nut tree,' according to the Wenlin. Image of a tree with fruit resembling a chestnut, according to the Shuo Wen.

亲 實 如 川 東 從 木 辛 聲

亲 is from 木(mù,tree) and 辛(xīn, the imagery of an upside down man, aligned opposite to the heirarchies, and attributed the meaning 'suffering'), according to the Shuo Wen. 新 has on the right the image of an axe. The components allow for various interpretations. Axe chopping wood, change, renewal, and suffering associated there with 辛. The cutting of a tree might symbolizing the initial state of a pattern being acted upon to bring forth change. The upside down man may also symbolize will, intent, etc. The transformation of patterns, subject to the creative intent or will descending.

親, with 見(jiàn, see, image of a man with a big eye) added to 亲, has now the meanings kin, kiss, relatives, etc.

親 生 也 從 見 亲 聲





Shuo Wen uses the term 至 (to, towards), the imagery of a bird descending to the earth, to describe 親. In certain cultures, including certain aboriginal ones, the descending bird denotes descend of a higher spirit.

To fetch wood, is the sense Shuo Wen attributes to 新

新 取 木 也 巡 斤 棄 聲

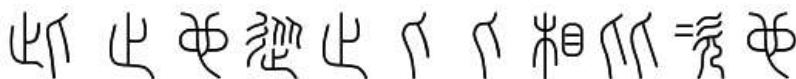
此 [cǐ]



**This.** To stop 止 [zhǐ, image of a

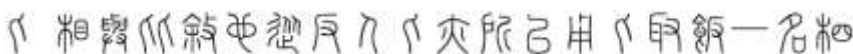


feet] and turn 匕 [ the form here derives from the image of a man turning to the right] as if to observe something.



Shuo Wen attributes to the character, the meaning 止 [zhǐ, stop].

Shuo Wen interprets 匕 as the image of a man turned around.



is Shuo Wen's form for 匕

is Shuo

Wen's form for 人[rén] person.

In certain cases, in the ancient forms are seen the imagery of

a man turned upside down 化 [huà]

where 匕 has now come to be used. It may also derive, as the Shuo Wen notes, in certain characters from the imagery of an ancient kind of spoon [匕 ,bǐ]. Variants of 匕 include

名 [míng] **Name.** "What is □ called out in the 夕

dark," says Karlgren. From 夕[xī, evening, the image of the moon] and 口[kǒu, mouth]. One must say□ one's name to identify oneself in the dark 夕.



己 [jǐ] Self. The Sixth of the 10 Heavenly Stems . The image of thread on a loom, according some sources. The self as that which weaves the appearance of reality, perhaps.



Or, the self as a thread in the fabric of reality.







**Right, righteous,**

**straight, correct.** From 止, the image of a foot, and 一, a line. "To 止 stop at the 一 line ...without going astray," says Wiegier.

Ancient variants sometimes show a feet, which can symbolize restrain, under the character for 'above, Heavens, etc.'

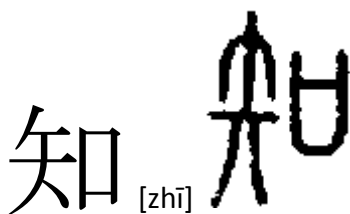

 The restrain imposed by the Heavenly Hierarchy, the sense - that which is righteous.

In more ancient variants is seen a rectangular or circular space


 in front of the feet



. The circular form, in both Chinese and Western traditional thought symbolized the Heavens, while the rectangular form symbolized the Earth. In another sense, the Circular form was used as a symbolic of what was referred to in certain philosophies as the quintessence of matter while the rectangular form symbolized the ordering of the four elements. The circle is also often interpreted as the vault of Heavens, etc. There are of course several other associations as well.



**Know, knowledge.**



詞 [cí ,Word], is the meaning Shuo Wen attributes. "Know, understand, perceive - 'to 口 speak so as to 矢 hit the mark,' says the scholastic commentator," according to Karlgren .

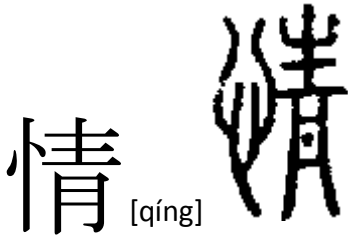


Ancient variants include

And possibly



corruptions, found on seals include



[qíng]

Feeling, emotion, love,

**inclination, affection, interest.**

On the left is the image of a heart. On the right is a character 青 which means youth, young, green. 青 is the color of East, according to the Shuo Wen.

In explaining 青, "The 丹 hue of 生 growing plants," says



Weiger, while asking “But 丹 means RED! Was the inventor of 青 a Daltonian?”

And Karlgren says, "The 丹 color of 生 vegetation, 生 in the same time phonetic."



The lower portion of 青 is 丹



(dān, red, cinnabar) . Cinnabar is a red colored mineral, mercuric sulfide, chemically. The 丶 dot is said to depict a piece of cinnabar. The Shuo Wen explanation is interpreted as saying the frame around it represents the mine from which the cinnabar is taken.

For Weiger, 丹 is cinnabar in "the crucible of the Taoist alchemists," and for the 王宏源 "placed in a tray or palette to be used as red pigment."

In some traditions, Mercury is associated with the feminine, and Sulphur with the masculine – so we can speculate that

here we may have references to Daoist concepts related to the interaction of Yin and Yang.

The upper portion of 青 is 生 [shēng life, birth, the imagery of

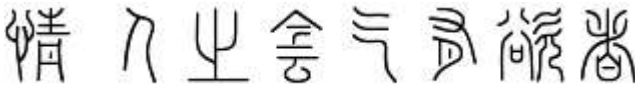


a growing plant]

Together, 青 might ideographically signify the emergence of life from nature's alchemy. Hence, the sense the 'color of nature.' 'Young, youth' etc. might be associations with the ideographic sense 'a fresh life, a freshly generated life.'

青蛙 [qīngwā] means frog and in the symbolism of Western traditions, and fairy tales, the frog is the base matter which is subject to the alchemical transformation.

As a mnemonic, the emotion in a young 青 or tender heart 心. Shuo Wen says, it is "The Yin Qi 含气 of humans, which has in it the nature of desire. "



無

[wú] **Without, Nothingness.**



The

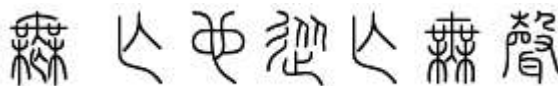
Shuo Wen says the character is composed of 𣏟[wǔ, forest,



luxuriant]

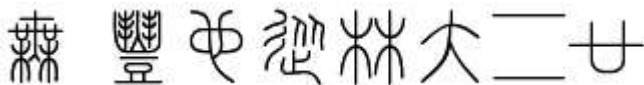


and 亡[wáng, disappear].

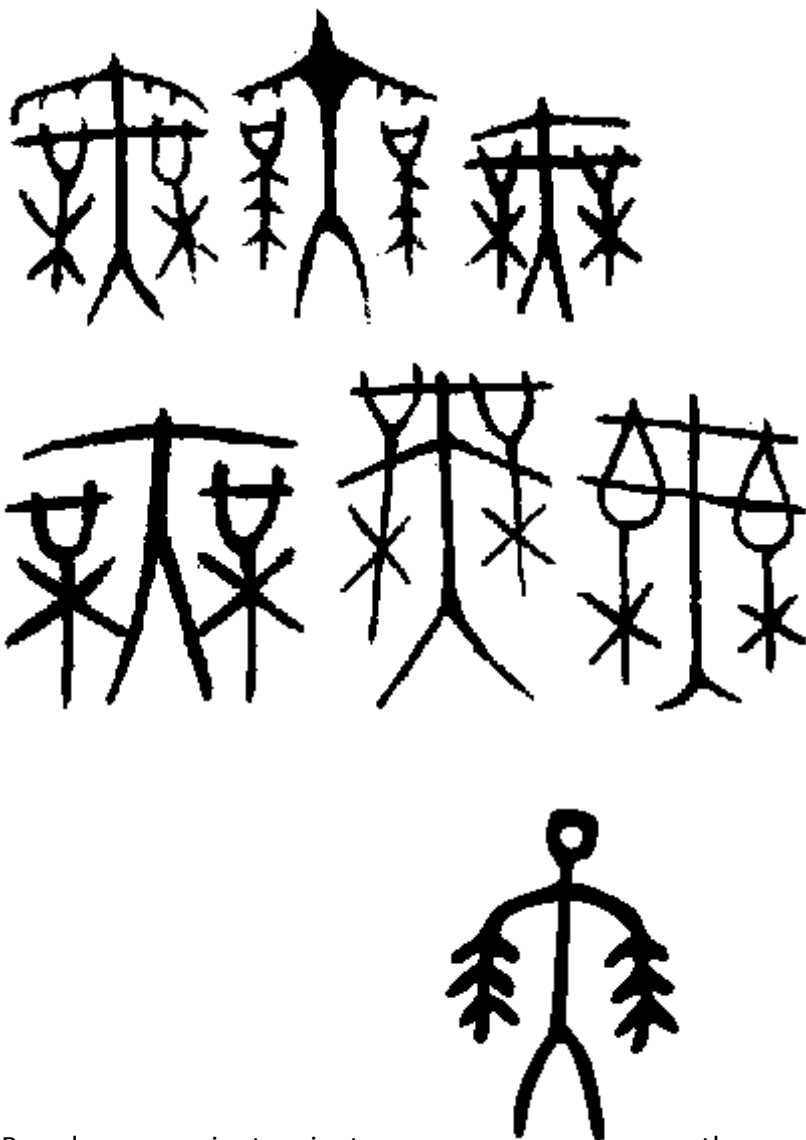



The state where the luxuriant manifestations 𣏟 disappear 亡.

𣏟, in turn, is composed of



林[lín, forest, from the ideograph for a tree 木(mù) doubled],  
大[dà, immense], and two 廿[niàn, twenty, from two  
十(ten)s combined and joined at the bottom, 二十并也].



Based on an ancient variants as , the Wenlin says, 無 was the “Picture of a dancer with fancy sleeves or tassels in his or her hands. Now 'dance' is 舞 wǔ,

with 舛 two feet added to the bottom. 無 was borrowed for the word wú 'without' (because the words sounded similar)."

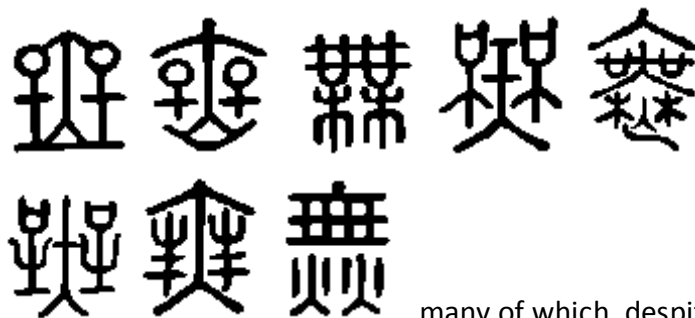
舞[wǔ, dance] had the ancient forms



An ancient variant of the character 無, mentioned by the



Other Seal form variants include:



, many of which, despite their apparently being corruptions, would be of interest to the student of symbology.

第 [dì] **number, -th, rank, degree, order, etc.**

Is composed of 弟 [dì, younger brother] and 竹 (zhú) 'bamboo' on top .




弟, which has the ancient forms

美 美 友 華 , is

“A thread that is wound on a spool, having a catch at the top and a winch at the bottom, primitive instrument, reef and bobbin,” according to Wieger. By extension, “succession of brothers, elder, younger; succession; younger brothers.”

五

Another interpretation of the form  is that it is a bundle of sticks tied together. Part of the same bundle, thus the sense “a younger brother, etc.”

The Shuo Wen explains the character such:

夷 韋 束 止 彳 夷 也 從 古 齊 止 彳 夷 止 屬 皆 從 夷

A leather bundle's ordering.

, are ancient variants of 弟.

These forms align with an interpretation of the character as a bundle of leather, or, perhaps, of leather sheets.

The ideogram 竹 (zhú), bamboo twigs add the sense *to count*, bringing out the sense number, -th, rank, degree, order, the position of a thing as part of a group, etc.

[chǎn]

Produce, give birth to,

**product.**



From 生, the image of a plant, and 彦 [ yàn, man of virtue &



ability] abstracted, according to the Shuo Wen.

彦 is composed of 文[wén, civilized], 厂[chǎng, attributed the meanings factory, yard, department in modern usage as a shortened form of 廠]. "A cliff which projects, a stiff slope," says Wieger, explaining 厂, concurring with the Shuo Wen's explanation. The ancient pronunciation was likely similar to hǎn, and the meaning was 'cliff.' A cliff as where there is a new generative activity, in this ideograph.

厂, as an ideograph, is considered cognate to 𠂇: a roof, a shed. "For a long time, cliff and dwelling were one and the same thing," says Lindqvist.

彡 [shān] depicts decorative patterns, decorative feathers, etc., and conveys here a sense of ordering.



The products of a place of civilized



activity



"The 彦 wrinkles formed on the body consequent upon 生 child-birth. Fecundity, to bear, to produce," says Wieger. "The signific is 生, interpretation of the rest uncertain," says Karlgren.

定 [ding] 𠩺 𠩻 𠩼

𠩽 𠩾 𠩿 𠪀

**Stable, fixed.**

All things under the 宀 (mián) roof, in a 正(zhèng) rectified-restrained state.

𠩺 𠩻 𠩼 𠩽 𠩾 𠩿 𠪀

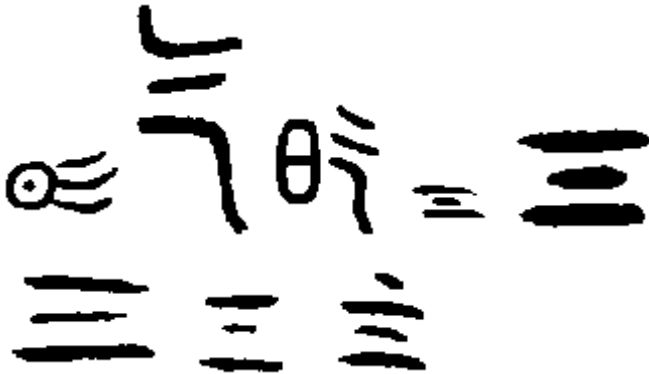
气 [qì] Air, vapour, vital energy, breath.

Clouds and circulating energy, according to the Shuo Wen.

"Curling vapours rising from the ground and forming clouds above," says Wieger.

气 雲 气 屯 象 形 凡 气 上 屬 皆 起 气

Ancient variants include:



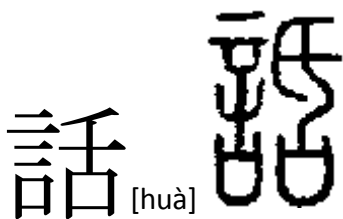
A closely related form is 氣[qì] which according to Wenlin shows 气 steam rising from 米[mǐ, imagery of grains



cooks.

] rice as it

氣[qì] has the ancient variants



[huà]


Speech, conversation, talk,

**saying.** On the left is 言 yán, words; and on the right is














a character which is attributed the meaning 'held in the


mouth,’ by the Shuo Wen. Karlgren apparently reads the Shuo Wen attribution as “to shut the mouth,” and gives it the sense “bring together, join.” Wenlin reads the Shuo Wen entry as “hold in the mouth.” Attributed pronunciations for












the word  , which is currently no longer in use, include kuo and guā.

The Shuo Wen says  is from the image of a mouth



 and  abstracted .

 is the foundational portion of a plant, according to the Shuo Wen.

As a mnemonic: Words  with a founded 

expression  - talk, a meaningful conversation. Words which coherently, good-orderly come together, according to the Shuo Wen, which says  is phonetic.

詒 會 合 讞 辛 也 詒 辛 言 聲 傳 白 告 止 詒 辛

 [zhòng]  Heavy, important;[



chóng] **again; once more** .

重 厚 屯 𡵓 𡵓 東 聲

, says the Shuo

Wen.

One explanation given traditionally is that the people of

importance were seated  on the east  [dōng, east, image of the sun behind a tree].



may also be interpreted as an active manifestation's



patterns



, and



a man on earth, in whose

perception it manifestss. Early Western scholars of Chinese have interpreted certain seal forms of the character as a pile of weights.

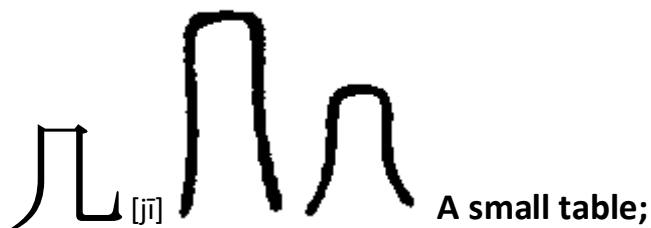
  

"The small seal has 人 (rén) at the top, 土 (tǔ) at the bottom and 東 (dōng) phonetic in the middle; this is not original, for an older form is simply a picture of a weighing-machine, see WIEGER," says Karlgren.

The meaning associated with the sound 重chóng may derive from such an interpretation weights piled *repeatedly –again,*



*once more, on another.*



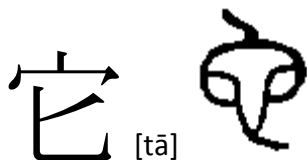
Ideographic representation of a table. According to the Zhou Li, there are five types of 几.

《周禮》五几：玉几、雕几、彤几、鬃几、素几。



**show, list.** From the ideograph for a feather 毛, and the ideograph for a cloth 衣. The surface, the superficial, the external.





**It.** The picture of a snake. As a

mnemonic, how one would refer to a snake, “it.” Sinologists theorize that the character was borrowed because it shared the same sound as the word for ‘it’ – in other words, that it



was a ‘phonetic-loan.’ 蛇 [shé] is the character now used to represent a snake, a character which has the imagery of a snake head modified by the image of a reptile or a worm to the left. The most ancient forms combine the



image of the snake with that of a human feet



Ancient variants attributed to this character, include



, etc. However, these forms resemble much the ancient forms

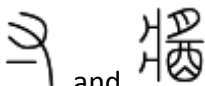


of 也 .

# 將

[jiāng] **Shall, indicating the future,**

**introducing object of main verb [jiàng] a general.**



From 𠂇 and 𠂇, a character showing meat and wine on a table, abstracted. Indicating that which will be subject of an action in the future – as indicated by the measured-



restrained movement of a hand 𠂇 about to take food on a



table 𠂇. As an ideographic association: He who choses to



pick 𠂇 for food predominantly meat and wine 𠂇 - a military general.



"From: 寸 (hand in the 'thumb' var.) to offer 月 (肉) meat, signific and 𠂇 qiáng phonetic," says Karlgren.

片 [qiáng] is a plank of wood, left half of 木, tree. Pronounced  
 片 [pán], it indicates slit bamboo or chopped wood, a strip,  
 and is also a measure word for shop/field/etc.



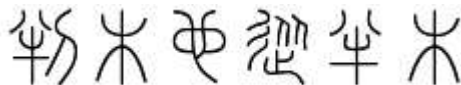
Shuo Wen notes that 片 is from 片



[piàn] slice flipped around.



Explaining 片 [piàn], the right side of a 木 tree sliced  
 in the middle, Shuo Wen says



. Split wood, from a 木  
 tree cut in half.

化 [huà]



The image shows four stages of the character '化' (huà) in black ink. From left to right: 1. A modern, simplified version of the character. 2. A traditional, slightly more stylized version. 3. A more archaic, cursive-like version. 4. A very ancient, highly stylized version with thick, blocky strokes.



The image shows two ancient script variants of the character '化' (huà) in black ink. The first variant on the left is a cursive, flowing form. The second variant on the right is a more structured, blocky form.

**Change, transformation, transform.**

From 亻 (人) a person, and the image of a person turned around 匕.

女 [nǚ] 𡚦 𡚧 𡚨 𡚩

𡚪

**Women, female.** The imagery of a kneeling women.



中 中 中 中 中

中



五 <sub>[wǔ]</sub> X

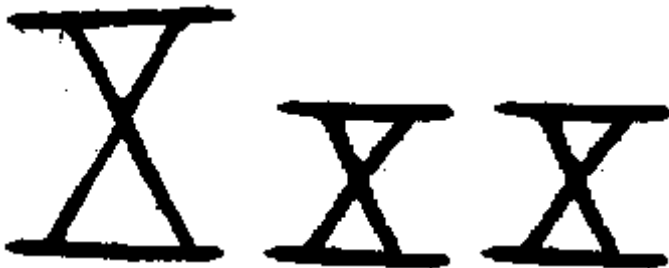
from the Shuo Wen,

五五祐屯繼二舍易社天地間亥午屯辰五上屬皆繼五

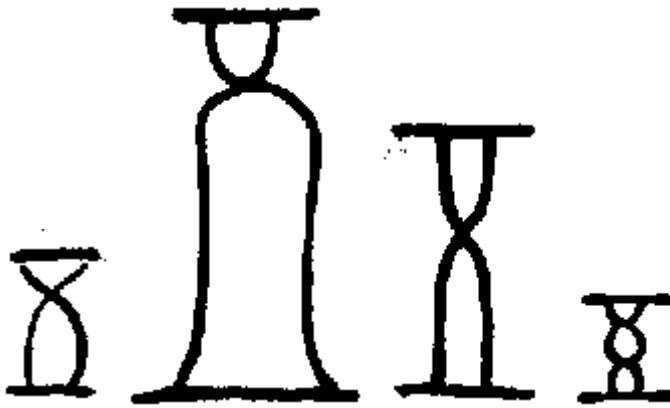
in saying. "The two principles yīn and yáng, begetting the five elements, between heaven and earth."

The two horizontal lines show the Yin and Yang, between Heaven and Earth and X symbolizes their interaction, generating the 五行 - a term often translated as the ‘five elements.’

Ancient forms of 五 include



And the variants include:



Karlgren considers the explanation ‘far-fetched.’ However, giving credence to the Shuo Wen notion is the prevalence of similar ideas in other cultures. The Western mystic and author John Dee theorizes in his *Monas Hieroglyphica* published in 1564, that the Roman symbol for five, ‘V’, “ frequently used by the most ancient Latin philosophers,” derives from the idea of a symbolic merging of the two. He further notes that this forms the exact half of the symbol for 10, which was an ‘X’ amongst the ancient Romans.

代 [dài]

**Represent.** The character Shuo

Wen uses to give the form meaning is 更([gèng] intensify,

更

furthermore, [gēng] night watch) 更, the imagery of a hand holding an implement, stoking a furnace.

代 更 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

The left side of the character is the image of a man, and on

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

the right is 𠂔[yì]

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔



which in ancient times had the meaning 楸[jué], a short wooden stake or peg. 弋[yì] now is interpreted as an arrow with a trailing string, used for hunting birds.

From man 人 and a piece of wood used for marking a position 弋. Thus the sense 'Represent.'



**Each other, mutual.** From the image of an eye and a tree, the tree being symbolic of manifested patterns, and the eye is that which is able to perceive the manifested. A mutual interaction of the two generates perception. "The

abstract meaning of reciprocity...is said to come from a kind of pun, the two elements 木 and 目 both being pronounced mù," says Wieger.

華 [huá] 𣎵 𣎵 𣎵 𣎵

𣎵 𣎵 𣎵 𣎵

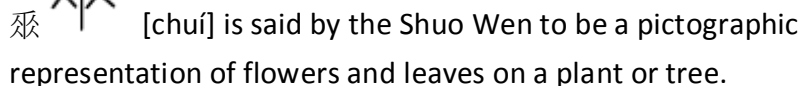
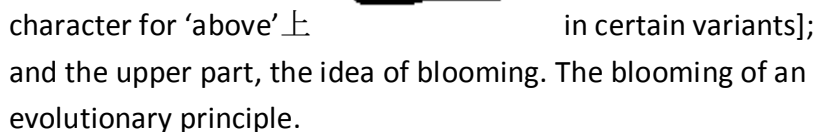
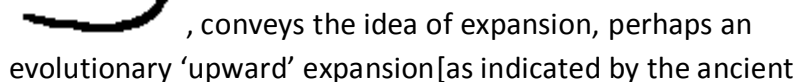
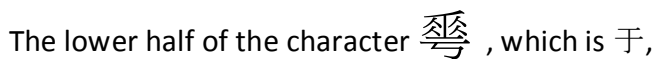
Brilliancy,

**glory, splendor** . "Perhaps simply a picture of a luxuriant

tree," says Karlgren.

𣎵 榮 𣎵 𣎵 𣎵

says the Shuo Wen: Glorious. From 艸[cǎo, grass, buds] and 榮[a character which the Shuo Wen says depicts buds blooming on a tree. 艸木華也從榮于聲].




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平 [píng]

𐎧𐎠𐏀𐎧𐎡𐏁𐎢𐎺𐎠𐎥

The level expansion of a language- expression, says the Shuo Wen. Language here is perhaps to be understood as an ordering expression, creative-ordering in nature. The form derives from 于 and 八, according to the Shuo Wen. 八[bā, eight] is indicative of formative, ordering divisions and myriadizations in the process of the energy's expansion. The

form  八 with a horizontal line on top likely signifies uniform expansion. The level, plane, uniform nature is emphasized by the horizontal line.

Ancient forms and variants include:

平 兩

## [huò] Or, Perhaps

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A city bounded 口 by walls 一, and guarded 戈, was the ancient sense of the character. The city bounds are unstable and changing, hence the sense ‘or,’ ‘perhaps.’

九 [jiǔ] 九 九 九 九

九 九 九 Nine.

九 易 上 變 屯 象 箕 屈 田 突 盡 上 形 尺 九 上 屬 皆 從 九

“九 may have depicted an arm bent at the elbow, which may have been a gesture indicating the number nine,” says Wenlin.

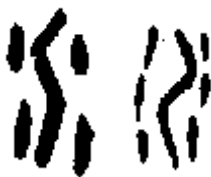
The intensification of yang 陽 energy, having reached its peak. The character’s form shows a ‘wavy’ movement of the arm. The wavy movement of the arm may symbolize an exhaustion of forces, upon having reached the maximum

strength that it can expended. The arm symbolizes strength, of yang, masculine, nature. A variant of the character shows

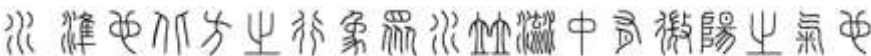


nine distinct segments:

The Pythagorean philosopher Iamblichus notes that the number nine is the “greatest of numbers within the decad... an unsurpassable limit.”



**Water.** The imagery of flowing water. The ancient forms resemble the trigram for water: ☵ [坎, Kǎn].



Shuo Wen notes that in the middle of the flowing water is Yang qi. In the Trigrams or BaGuas, the broken lines symbolize the feminine, Yin, and the solid lines the male principle in nature, Yang. Water, the Ba Gua suggests, is externally feminine, and internally masculine. The Ba Gua for Fire is ☲ [離, Lí], which would suggest an externally manifested masculine aspect and an internal feminine aspect.

Variants of 水 include:



社 [shè] **Society.** 社 On the left side of this

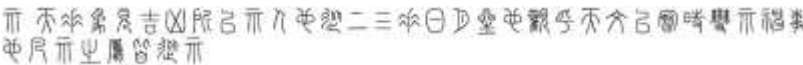
character is 示 [shì, altar] and on the right is 土 [tǔ, earth].

"Altar to the spirits of the land; sacrifice to the spirits of the land; tutelary deity, village, society - the 示 religious rites for 土 the land," says Karlgren.

Variants of 社 include:



示 is a character with more complex interpretations that would the explanation of it as an altar suggest. Karlgren expands on notions associated with the symbol, "Prognostic, presage; indicate, exhibit, proclaim, declare, inform -- the scholastic commentators explain: 二 (i.e. 上) heaven and (the strokes below:) sun, moon and stars! Occurs as a signfic in characters bearing on religion, rites, etc.," aligning in his ideas with the Shuo Wen, which says the three strokes below are the Sun, Moon, and the Stars:



Ancient forms of include  
and some of the most ancient variants seem to show a flow

from above down

alongside with

forms as . Wenlin interprets these saying  
they “might depict T an altar with dripping sacrifices on it.”

[bǐ] Compare.

. Two people side by

[illegible]

廩 山 如 堂 邇 山 家 聲

家 女 也 悲 亡 哭 聲

位 [wèi],  **Position.** "Position, place,

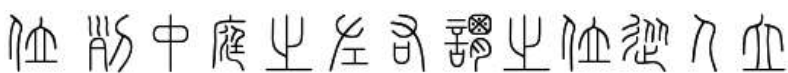
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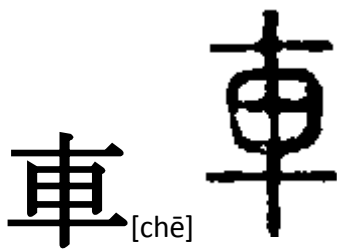


standing: position (at court),"

says Karlgren.



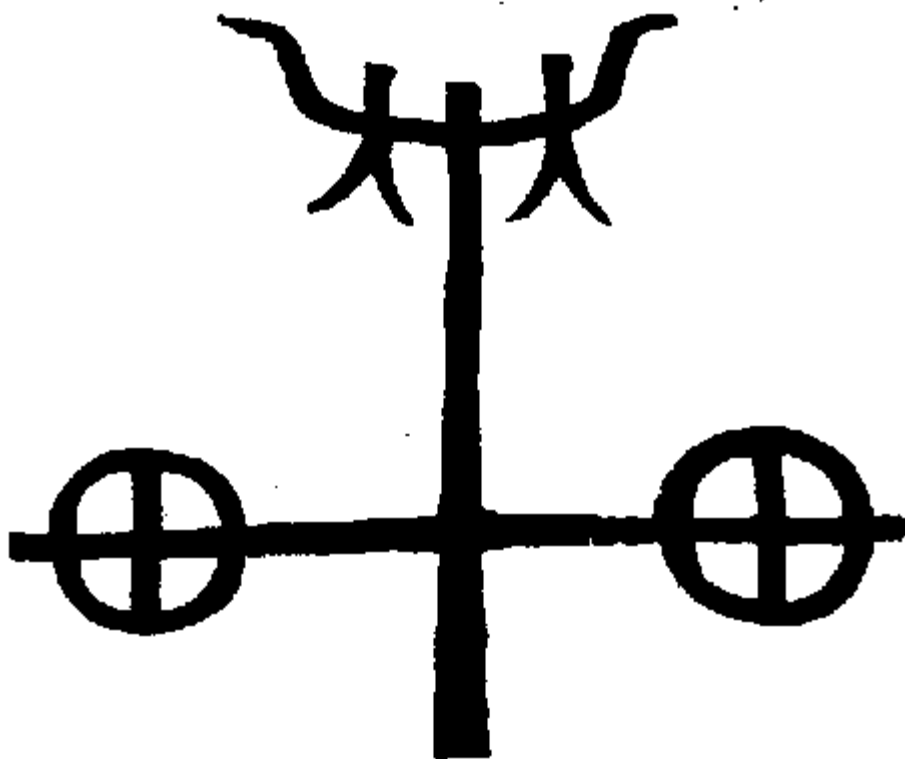
The imagery of two people standing in an ordered sequence.

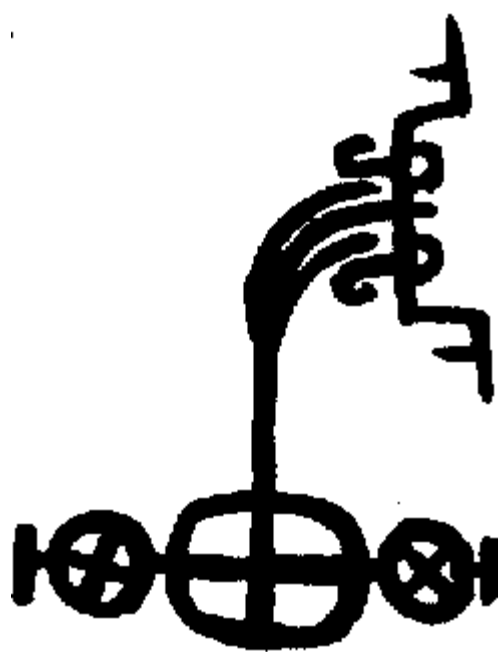


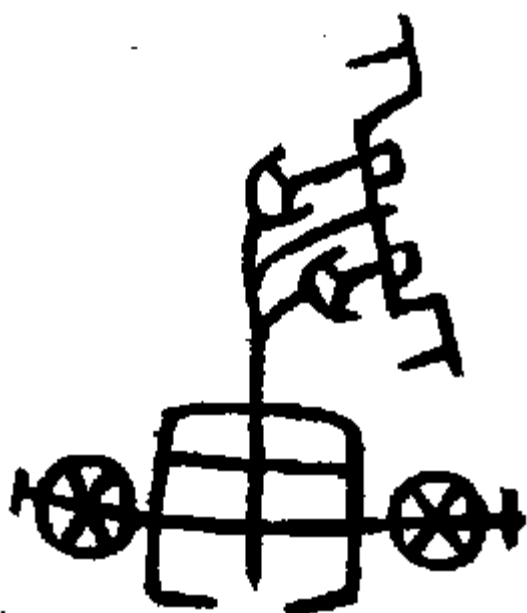
**Car, Vehicle, a vehicle with**

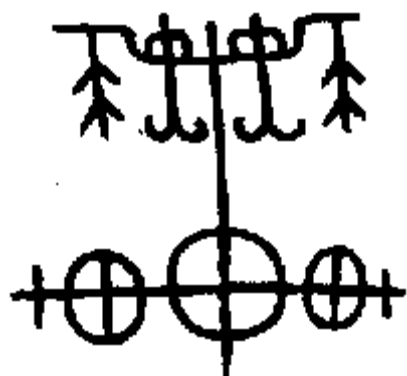
**wheels [jū] a chinese chess piece.** Pictographic depiction.

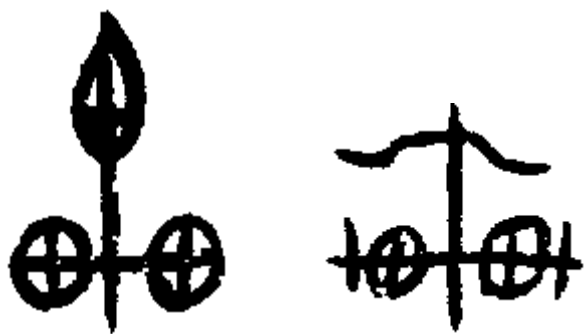
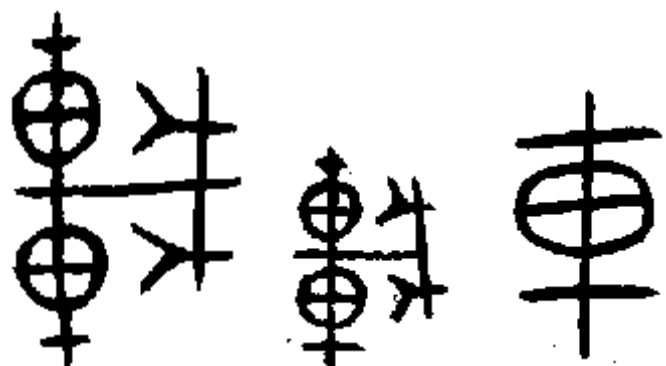
Ancient forms include:



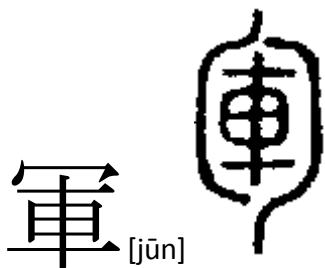











 [jūn]      **Army, military. An**

**organizational division in an army.**



A formation four thousand strong, according to the Shuo Wen.

From the image of a chariot and 包[bāo, bag, wrap, bundle] abstracted, according to the Shuo Wen.

Ancient forms show a chariot and a wrap around it. This may suggest an idea of reinforcement, the idea that there is a bundle of chariots, or perhaps that the formation of the war chariots in battle was such that it wrapped the first layer of the army.





Certain ancient forms show an arm around the chariot. The arm might be symbolic of strength, the ability to act, etc.



使 [shǐ] 使

Make, cause to, use, employ

使 令 也 從 人 吏 聲

To command, says the Shuo Wen. A Man 亻 (人, person) giving out instructions to officials 吏.

Variants:

𠬪 𠬫 使



unfolding] an expressed intent [as suggested by the imagery of the mouth].

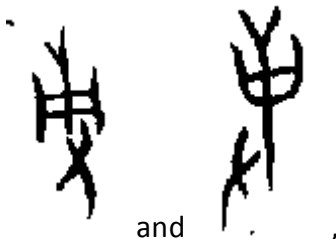


In explaining 史 shǐ, history, Karlgren says: "Hand holding a style (pen) and writing on a □ wooden block."

Wenlin says: "It isn't clear what the hand was originally holding; it looked like 中 (zhōng) 'middle' in the oldest



characters. It appears that 史 shǐ 'history', 事 shì 'event', and 吏 lì 'officer', and the right side of 使 shǐ 'make' were all originally the same: a hand holding some unknown object. These words are believed to be cognates."



The oldest forms show both contrary to what Wenlin suggests.



史 [shǐ] is a hand writing the expressed, history, that which time expresses, the recording of the expressed. The active unfolding of 事 is absent, perhaps as this is but the mere passive record of a manifested event.

史 記 事 省 也 從 又 持 中 中 正 也



事 [shì] with the triplicate unfolding on top is an event, thing, work, duty, an active actualization of that which is expressed, in its active dynamic expression.

事 職 也 從 史 上 省 聲

吏[lǐ], an officer, seems to derive from the same ancient form as 事 or a closely related form, he whose job is to actualize commands given and hence, now the mouth has a more prominent expression in the character 吏 – the officer's role being largely receive a clearly given command.

"From 人 signific and 吏 shǐ phonetic...there must have been some Archaic combination of consonants (shl-, sl-?)," writes Karlgren, wondering how 吏 shǐ may have been a phonetic component as suggested by the Shuo Wen.

使 shǐ is 吏[lǐ] officer modified by the image of a man on the left 亻 [人, rén, person] likely the person giving out the commands – and hence the meanings, make, cause to, send as envoy, have someone do something.

These, as are other explanations in this series, are but ideographic extrapolations. These forms may convey senses much deeper than we may appreciate from a standpoint of

attempting to merely make ideographic associations, from within our limited world view.

度 [dù] Degree, extent, regulate; "To

have 又 in one's hand 廿 (twenty:) all the inhabitants of 广  
the house: rule, regulate, cf. 庶 and 妥," says Karlgren.

度 蕩 粉 屯 邇 又 庚 省 聲

Indicates that which is restrained and regulated by the Law,

says the Shuo Wen. From hand which may symbolize

here control or restrain and abstracted, according to

the Shuo Wen. <sup>17</sup> is all people gathered together under a room, perhaps around a fireplace.

庚 屋 二 眾 屯 邰 广 莢 莢 古 夬 炎 寧

𦉰

is an ancient variant of 光[guāng, light,

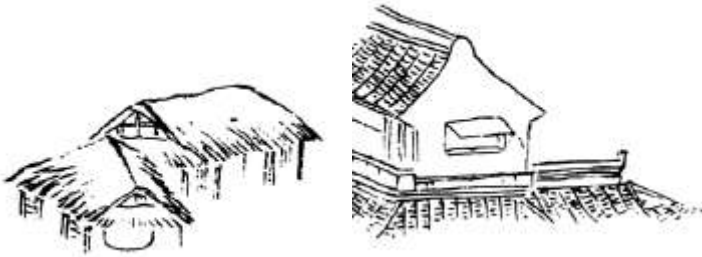
illumined, brightness, glory]


𦉰

, according to the Shuo Wen.







並 [bìng] 

**Equally, simultaneously.** The

ancient form was the imagery of two people standing side-by-side.







𠂔 Shows two structures evolving upward, interlocked in the process. 𠂔 is attributed the sense “level” by the Shuo Wen. This character is modified by the addition of 从 two people following each other, or moving together with one another, to

give 并

解 餅

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 [huó] Live, alive, living, vivid.

From 氵, shuǐ, water  and  which has the sense to ‘hold in the mouth.’ As a mnemonic – with water in the mouth, living, vivid.




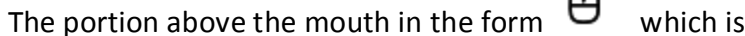
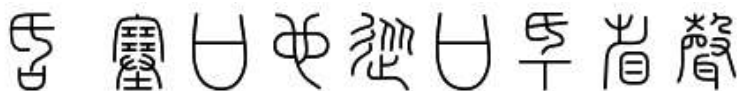






The sound of water flowing, says the Shuo Wen.

Note that  is defined such by the Shuo Wen:



abstracted, according to the Shuo Wen, is defined as:



The foundation portion of a tree or of plants.



Note that 𣎵 was an ancient character for the upper portion of a tree. An ancient variant of above 上 [shàng]



氏 [shì, clan, family], the top portion of 𣎵 has been explained such: “A floating plant, without roots, that ramifies and grows, like the *Nymphaea*, so common in China, *Euryale ferox* and others, that spring up from a grain, float first, then fix themselves and acquire in a short time a prodigious development. By extension, development, multiplication; a wandering horde of primitive times, a clan, a family” by Wieger. The seal forms likely show the leaves of a water plant, overlapping each other. Ancient variants of

𐌲 include 𐌺𐌺𐌺𐌺

𐌳𐌴𐌵𐌶𐌷

𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌻𐌼𐌽

𐌾𐌿



關 [guān] 關 關 關 關 pass;

**barrier; connection; key juncture; to shut.**

關 己 木 橫 持 門 戶 也 巡 門 罪 聲

To hold two door leaves together with a horizontal wood piece, says the Shuo Wen.

Ancient variants include:

𦉰 𦉱 𦉲 𦉳 𦉴

𦉵 𦉶 𦉷 𦉸 𦉹

𦉺 𦉻 𦉼

𦉽

**Notes:** The form 𦉽 has to do with imagery of strings passing through on a knitting loom, says the Shuo Wen.

𦉽 織 𠂔 𠂕 𠂖 𠂗 𠂘 𠂙 𠂚 𠂛 𠂜 𠂝 𠂞 𠂟 𠂠 𠂡 𠂢 𠂣

𠂤 𠂥 𠂦 𠂧

Note that the form 𠂤 is 𠂥, an ancient form of

𠂦

, in the Shuo Wen's perspective.

卵 凡物森然者卵生象形凡卵上屬皆從卵  
卵

卵 [luǎn], which has the meaning egg, ovum, is where all life is initially nurtured.

體 體

[tǐ]

Body, the system, substance.



On the left is 骨 [gǔ, framework, frame, a bone],

a

character composed of 冎 [guǎ, bone, skeleton] and



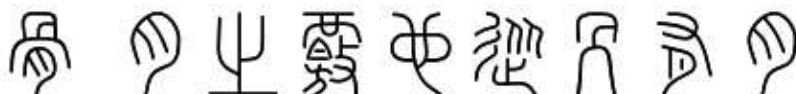
月 [肉 ròu, flesh]



is likely the imagery of the head and shoulder portion of a skeleton. "Picture of a skeleton," says Karlgren.



is a strip of flesh.





Explaining , the Shuo Wen says it is from the image of a



skeleton having flesh on it



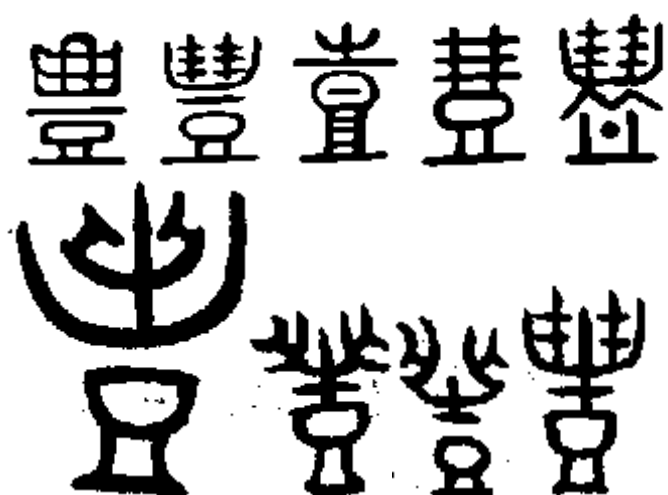
On the right hand side of 體[tǐ] is 豐 [fēng],

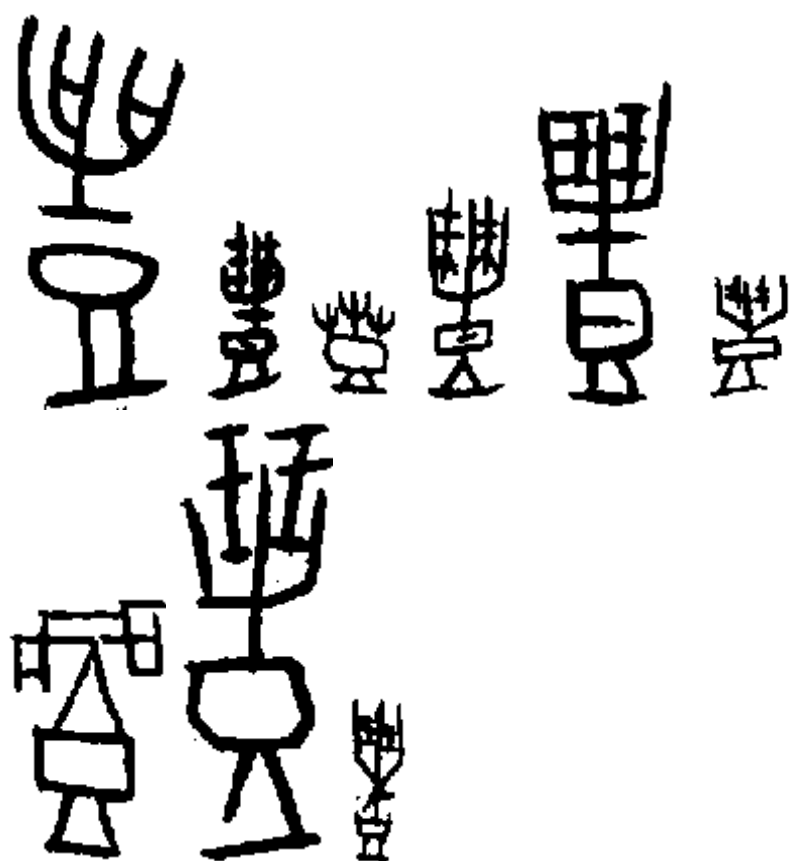


Which is a vase used in ceremonies, according to the Shuo Wen. Perhaps the imagery of a vase with flowers or other sacrificial objects in it. Ceremonies, in ancient Chinese thought, mirrored Cosmic form, or higher Cosmic patterns.



Ancient forms and variants of include:





體[tǐ] may thus be interpreted as the structure and framework

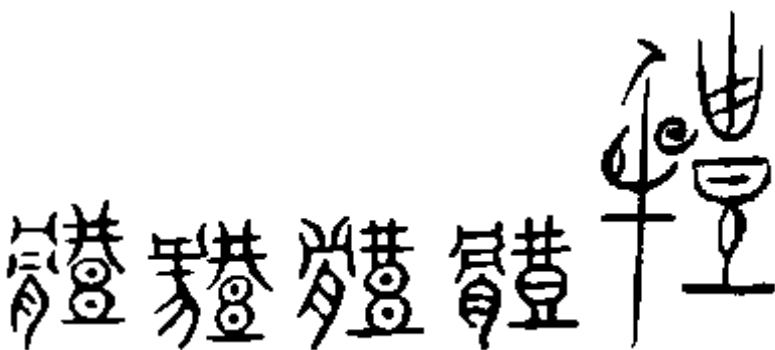


– signified by flesh and bones , along with the



ordered-manifested form of a **system** .

Variants of 體[tǐ], some of which are most likely corruptions, include:





豐 總 十 二 屬 也 巡 易 豐 聲

"Body; corporation; substance, the essential; (treat as essential:) treat with consideration; form, type -- is 豐 liei phonetic or co-signific (骨 bones and 豐 vessels)?" says Karlgren.

總

[zǒng] **general; sum; always**

𦵏 𦵐 𦵑 𦵒 𦵓 𦵔 𦵕 𦵖

*Gathered into a bundle* is the sense the Shuo Wen attributes



to the character.  $\pi$  is a fine thread, here conveying the idea of connection.

[illegible]



The ideographic sense of 恩 [cōng] is of a multiplicity of things emanating from the heart in quick succession. The character is composed of the image of a heart, and the image



of a chimney, or a vent, or a window upon it.



To give an overall order to a multitude of perception in



the heart .



Note: 恩[cōng] has the ancient forms



. The character



is also attributed the meanings alarm, agitation, a rushed state.



, whose traditional written form is 囟[cōng] has the meaning 'window on a room' attributed by the Shuo Wen.

煙囪 [yān cōng] has the meaning chimney.



給 

[gěi]

Give, give to, for, by [jǐ] give;





### provide; supply

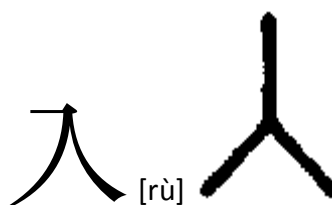
From 糸 sī, thread and 合 (hé, join, combine). To give is to make a connection, hence the use of the ideogram 糸 (sī, thread).

合 is an expression 口 of ordered assemblage 厶

Ancient forms and variants of 給 include:

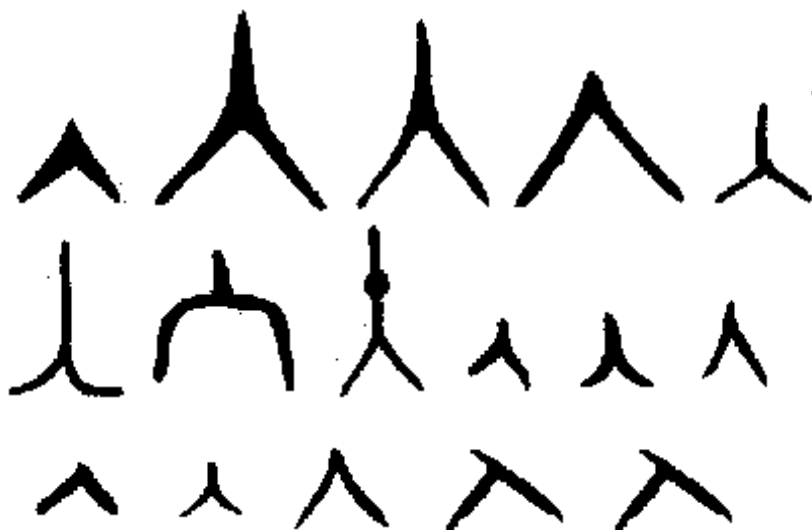
   


[rù]
Enter.



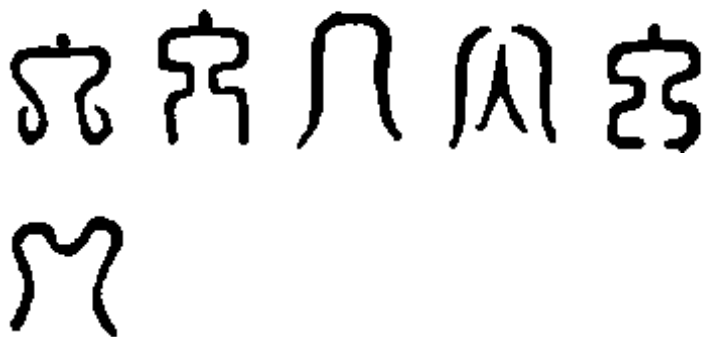
An abstract form suggesting the entry into a system and the gathering of things upward, an imagery analogous to roots entering the ground. Also interpreted as an arrow facing upward, the image of an entrance to a tent, etc.

Ancient forms include:





And their variants include:



甚

[shèn] **To a great extent; Very; Exceedingly;**

The phrase 甚至 [shènzhì] means ‘even, go so far as to.’ The pronunciation of the character is shén in the phrase 甚麼 [shénme] which has a meaning similar to the English “What.”

The character is described such by the Shuo Wen

尤安樂也從甘從匹耦也。 Outstanding peace and joy. The 甘 pleasure and sweetness as between a married pair 匹耦。

是 天 安 樂 也 從 甘 匹 匹 耦 也

Explaining 匹, Wieger says: "Half of a whole. The whole is represented by 四. A little more than the half of 四 was kept, so that the character is still recognisable;

分四為二也。一夫也。偶也。 That which, being joined with its like, forms a pair, a match. See the compound 甚."

And explaining 甚, he says "...Affection 甘 for the being 匹 that makes the pair (sexual)... This affection being very great, says, the Glose, hence the extended meaning, superlative, very, extremely, excessive...

从甘从匹。匹偶也。會意。安樂也。男女之大欲存焉。 "

**Note:** The Shuo Wen Explanation 匹 for says:

匹 四 支 也 從 匚 儿 儿 攴 一 匹 儿 夾 聲

And explaining the same character, Karlgren says, "Assort, assorted, equal, corresponding to; one of a pair, mate; (one of several:) ordinary, common, vulgar; measure of cloth (40 feet long) -- the signific is 匚 box (assort)"

And explaining [ gān, sweet, pleasant] , the Shuo Wen says:

**Note:** The phrase 甚麼 [shénme] may ideographically be understood as the seeking 甚 of that which would bundle and resolve 麼; a question one has in mind of the sense ‘what.’

[shí]

Number 10 used in

**fractions, for checks, etc; sundry; miscellaneous; various; assorted; a squad of ten soldiers in ancient**

**times.** A variant of the character is



The meanings are conveyed by the ideographic elements of 亻 (人 rén), and 十 (shí, ten). 十, ten has been understood by the ancients as containing all numbers – this may have contributed to the sense ‘various.’

As a mnemonic: A man 人 counting in tens 十.



**in a field of activity; the outer limits of a field, etc.**

The lower portion was the image of an alchemical vessel, and the upper portion was a circle, perhaps indicating the field of its activity. By extension, those involved in, or part of, a field of activity. The Shuo Wen says the lower portion was the image of a cowrie. It would seem from the ancient forms of various characters that the alchemical vessel and the cowrie were ideographically cognate in ancient Chinese thought.



鼎 貝 鼎 鼎 貝 貝

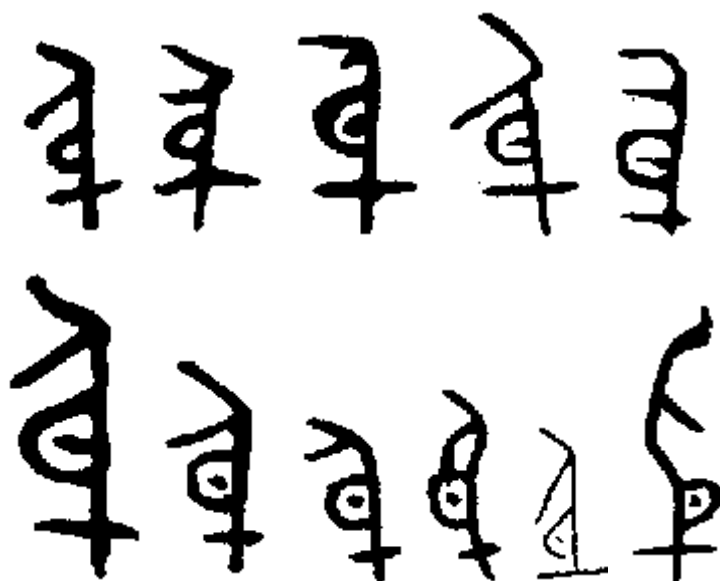
貝 貝 鼎 鼎 鼎

貝 貝 貝 貝 貝

身 [shēn] 𠂔 **Body.** The ancient forms show a

human body with a big belly, in the side view. Wieger and Lindqvist are of the opinion that it shows a pregnant body.

Ancient forms include:





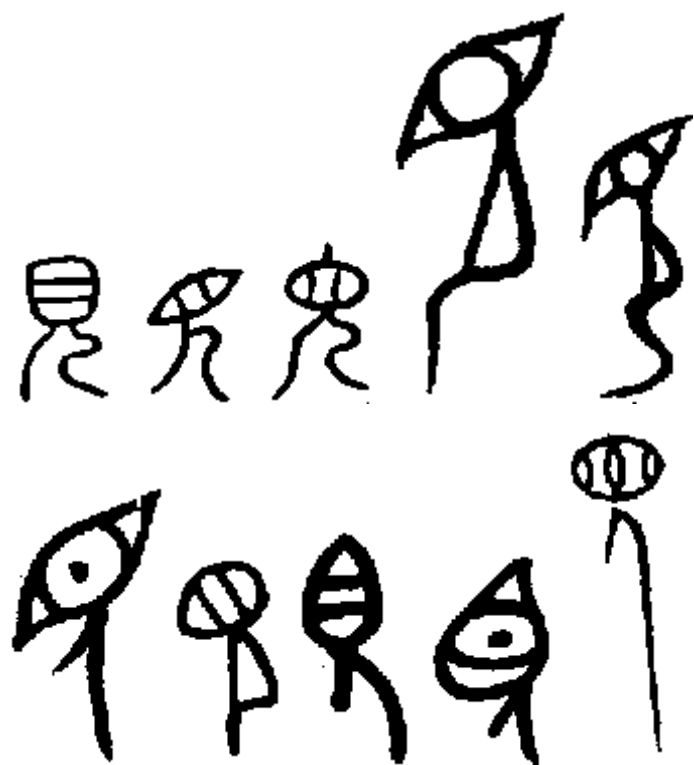
And their variants include:

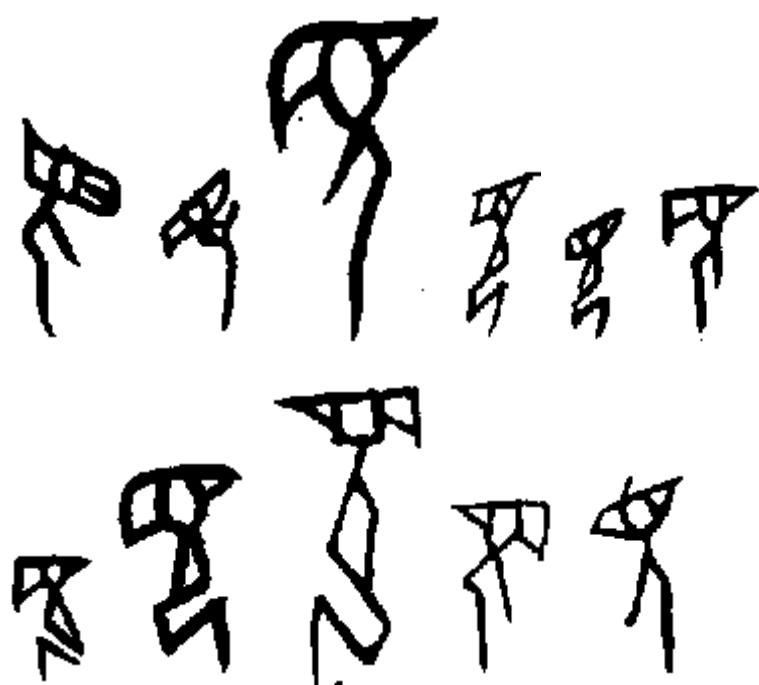


見 [jiàn]  **See.** The imagery of a person

observing, with a big eye.

Ancient forms and their variants include:





# 常

[cháng] **Often, constant, ordinary, normal,**

**frequent.**

The Shuo Wen explanation suggests the character was used in reference to clothing.

常 一 糸 也 巡 巾 尚 聲

“From 尚 shàng phonetic and 巾 (jīn) 'towel',” says Wenlin.

While asking, “What ORDINARY thing do you use more OFTEN than a 巾 towel?”


巾 has the ancient forms



, etc.



Yet another explanation is that the character depicts, ideographically, the cloth banner that guided troops during war – constant, unwavering, unchanging. 尚[shàng, esteem, noble, lofty], in that case, would be significant as well.

被 [bèi]  Quilt; cover; by

    一       

On the left side of the character is 衣 [yī, clothing] abstracted "On the top, the upper garments and sleeves. At the bottom, the robes waving and dragging," says Wieger. 衤 is a shorthand form for 衣[yī] clothing when it occurs as part of characters.

Distinguish from the shorthand form 衤 for 示 (shì, altar), and has one less stroke than 衤[yī]. The character 衣 is also in certain instances split into two portions with the top portion as 亠, as for instance in 裏[lǐ, inside].

人 世 心 心

及新取獸革者謂之及巡又為省聲

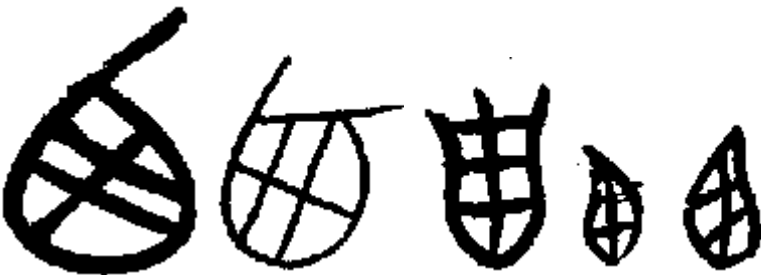


These two components combine together to give the meaning 'that which covers 衣 the skin 皮' – a quilt, blanket. That **by** which the skin is covered – a quilt, a blanket. The leather or hide 皮 **by** which clothing 衣 is made.

被 is pronounced pī in 被服 pīfú dress. The same two character word-phrase when pronounced 被服 ²bèifú has thhe meaning bedding and clothing.



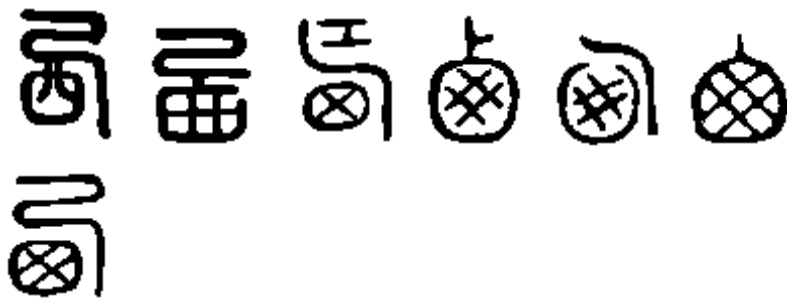
The more ancient forms seem to show the bird nest alone.





"Image of a bird sitting on its nest... the West, for the birds go to roost when the sun is setting," notes Wieger.

Seal variants include:




**Note:** In presentday writing, 西 and 酉 [yǒu, wine vessel] resemble in their form. 酉 differentiates itself from 西 by an additional line. 酉 is explained by Weiger as “An ancient vase... used for making or keeping the fermented liquors.”


次 [cì]      𠂔 Occurrence, time; second;

inferior.

𠂔 不 肯 不 精 也 𠂔 二 聲

A surface interpretation of the Shuo Wen explanation would be “Not in the front, not vigorous.” The Shuo Wen says the

form dervies from two characters  [欠, qiàn, lack, owe,

be short of], and  [èr, two] which the Shuo Wen views as phonetic. 二 might also contribute to the sense ‘secondary.’



期 [qī] 期 期 期 Time, phase,

period.

期 會 也 巡 月 其 聲

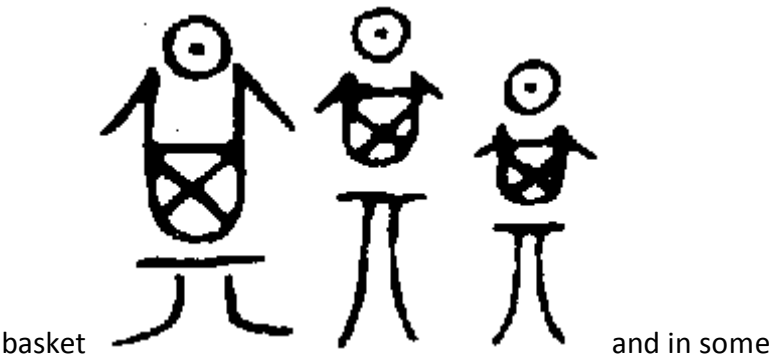
From the imagery of a moon  and a winnowing basket

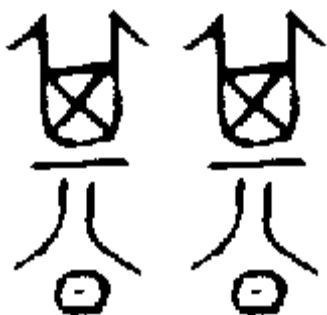


. The moon through its cyclic waxing and waning nature, conveys the sense “phases.” The winnowing basket leads the viewer of the ideogram to the notion that time acts in cycles on reality, while refining, as a winnow does, that which it acts on.



The more ancient forms have the picture of a sun above the





and, though more rarely, the



moon appears as well

# 各

[gè] **Each, every, different, differently,**

**separately.**



The present day form has 久 [zhǐ, walk slowly] over 口 [kǒu, mouth]. To ‘walk slowly’ and pause over each expression 口.  
The more ancient forms have an upturned feet in place of 久.







It would seem from a study of the ancient forms that where 久 occurs in the present day writing, the ancient forms had an upturned feet. A variant



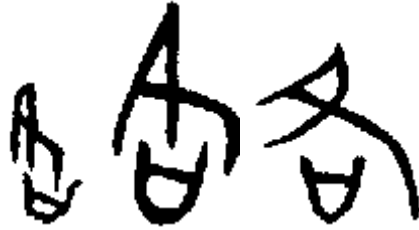
found amongst the ancient forms is - which allows for the ideographic interpretation 'to visit and pause at each space' – the upturned feet ideographically suggesting a hindrance in movement.

Remember that the component 久[zhǐ], traditionally attributed the meaning 'walk slowly,' is interpreted as a

person  with his limbs tied  ; a person

 holding a walking stick  , etc. It is likely that the form is a mere distortion of the image of an upturned feet, as seems apparent in the evolution of ancient forms of

characters as 各



久 may as well have been an independent form that later evolved, and was ideographically cognate to the image of an upturned feet.



[jɨ]

**And, as well as.** "Overtake, reach

to, attain; together with, and; (attaining:) when," says Karlgren.

及 逮 也 逮 又 人

The imagery of a hand reaching from behind and taking hold

of a person. . An idea that reaches up and takes hold of a person, so to interpret.

少

[shǎo] **few, little, lose, miss, less;** [shào]

**young.**


The Shuo Wen gives a meaning of ‘not many.’

少 不 多 也 逮 人 聲

"Of the same stem as 小 (xiǎo) small, and distinguished from 小 by addition of 丿 a mark, just as 大:太," says Karlgren. A small portion 小 retained and the rest let fall 丿. Explaining 小 (xiǎo) , Wieger says "This idea is represented by the 八 partition of an 丨 object already small by its nature."



**action indicator, a verb whose exact meaning is determined by its object.** On the left is 扌 (手 shǒu, hand, the abstract imagery of a hand with five fingers) which often symbolizes action. The right side is 丁 (ding, nail). The action on a nail, to hit.

Ancient forms of 丁 include  .  
The most ancient forms show merely the head of the nail, as

seen from above  .

特 [tè] 𠩺 Special, particular,

**exceptional .**

"A 牛 bull used in 寺 halls: for sacrifice," says Karlgren. 牛 is the ideogram for bull and 寺 means temple. A particular kind of bull used for a temple ritual. A deeper sense might be the

𠩺

bull 牛

as the matter driver, and 寺

𠩺

as a

particular kind of measured movement.

𠩺 𠩺 牛 𠩺 𠩺 牛 𠩺 𠩺



[xiàng]
**Appearance, shape, form,**

**image.** The imagery of an elephant. As an ideographic association: An animal of a conspicuous *form*.

象 南越大獸 尾鼻 耳三 年一乳 象 耳 耳 四 足 尾

A long nosed animal with tusks, says the Shuo Wen. Breast feeds its child for three years. The imagery shows the ears, tusks, four feet and the tail, according to the dictionary.



豕象無鼻





[kǒu] **Mouth; opening; entrance; measure**

**word for mouthfuls, people, wells, etc.**

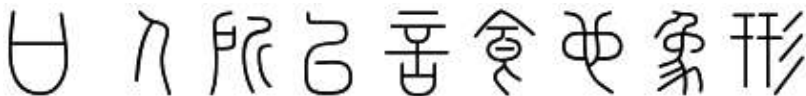


Image of that by which one expresses as well as eats,  
according to the Shuo Wen.

Distinguish this character from 囗 ( wéi, surround, a walled enclosure). In many instances, when it occurs as a part of other characters, 口 (wéi) has other components written inside it. In ancient forms, this distinction is often easy to

make as the mouth 口 [kǒu] is written



and the walled

enclosure 囗 [wéi] is



Ancient forms of 口 [kǒu, mouth] include:



And their variants include:





應 [yīng] 應 Promise, answer, respond,

**should, must, ought to.** 應 is a domesticated bird, and the ideogram conveys the sense ‘kept in restrain.’ The heart 心 is the symbol underneath. The sense of restrain, applied to the heart, gives the meanings ‘promise,’ ‘answer,’ ‘respond,’ ‘should,’ ‘must,’ ‘ought to,’ etc.


#### Notes:


The character 鷹 [yīng] means hawk; eagle; falcon. "The 隹 bird used (for hunting) by 人 man and kept in his 戶 [yǎn] house... character tautologically enlarged by 鳥," says Karlgren. A domesticated bird, thus. The word ‘domesticated’ derives from the Latin domus, Ancient Greek δόμος (dómos), Albanian dhomë (“a chamber, a room”), Sanskrit दाम (dáma) and Proto-Slavic \*domъ. The word **dōma** in Latin has the meaning ‘roof,’ house. To domesticate is ‘to keep under the roof 戶,’ thus. An ancient pronunciation of 戶 is suspected to have been as ‘njam?’


The bird in flight, is thought to represent that which is of a ‘volatile’ nature, in some western traditions. Can signify, amongst other things, an idea, that is, by its nature, unrestrained. That which is being transformed, or symbolic of

transformation, etc., the bird being used as a symbol for various stages of transformation by the western alchemical traditions. A word phrase for ‘thought’ in Chinese is 思維, the second character of which is formed of the imagery of a thread 糸 and that of a bird 隹. The bird-like flight of thought, the various ideas connected by a connecting-ordering principle 糸.

Remember that 𠂔 indicates a room, a dwelling, a shed, etc. "Compare 宀 the hut. 𠂔 is half of a hut, a shed, a shop," says Wieger. 𠂔 has a sense of refining upward movement, and hence suggests a dwelling, as opposed to 厂 which is a rudimentary cliff. The roof tops, or domes, of traditional Chinese houses taper upwards at the center, often. This can

be seen in the ancient forms of 宀 .

Distinguish the radical 宀  [mián, roof, canopy, 寶蓋]

from 冖  [mì, cover, the 平寶蓋 or the 秃寶蓋].

宀 𠂔 覆 窠 屋 屯 象 形 尺 宀 止 屬 皆 從 宀

几 覆 也 從 一 二 坐 尺 几 上 屬 皆 從 几

Distinguish the top portion of the character 雁[yāng], from



that of 雁 [yàn, wild geese] which has 厂[hǎn] cliff in place of 户[yǎn] house. Certain species of wild geese nest on high cliffs 厂. There they probably once shared a habitat with 亻 man, there.



**Note:** In the Shuo Wen is found the form, , with its ideographic nature explained by the following entries:

雁 當 也 從 心 雁 聲

雁 雁 鳥 也 從 隹 從 几 疒 省 聲

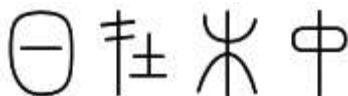
疒 不 能 言 也 從 疒 音 聲

疒 倚 也 几 象 疒 痛 也 象 倚 箸 上 形 尺 疒 上 屬 皆 從 疒

東 [dōng]



**East.**



, says the Shuo

Wen. The Sun 日 amidst the trees 木.

太

[tài] **Great. Immense.** 大[dà, great, immense]

modified with a dot added. The dot may signify spilling over, birth – and thus the 大 being the anthropomorphic grand which is the origin of things.



報 [bào] 報 Report, Reply, Recompense,

# Retribution.

報 當 辜 人 也 巡 卒 巡 及 及 服 辜 也

To manage a criminal, or treat a person as a criminal, seems to have been the ancient sense. "Punish; requite, recompense; report, inform; information, news; journal, gazette -- to 戾 (govern:) punish a 幸 criminal," says Karlgren.

On the left of 報 is a character 幸 [niè, criminal],

干

composed of 干 , a battering ram and 大 ( big, immense), according to a source – as the actions of such a man is as that of the battering ram 干, taking society by surprise, and destructive in nature.

幸 戾 己 繫 人 也 巡 大 巡 干 一 白 大 聲 也 凡 幸 止 屬 皆 巡 幸 一 白 讀 音 報 一 白 倘 語 己 盤 不 止 爲 幸 讀 音 報

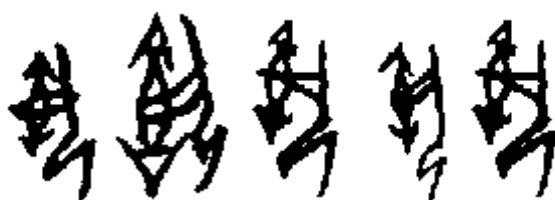


A character related in form is 𡗗 [xìng, good fortune, luck;]. It derives from 𡗗, the imagery of an upside down man, 夭 the image of a young person with head bent – the two opposing aspects of existence, as life and death, joy, and suffering, attributed the senses fortune, happiness, etc. Wieger interprets the form as a man 夭 who gets over opposition 𡗗, who triumphs over resistance.

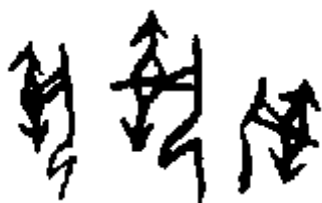
Wenlin notes, “The explanation is uncertain. There were two words, 幸 xìng 'luck' and 幸 niè 'criminal'; the latter is obsolete. Karlgren(1940) said 幸 niè 'criminal' depicted manacles; ("Ancient handcuffs" says 王宏源). 幸 xìng 'luck' may or may not have been related.”



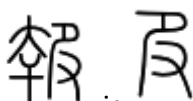
In the ancient forms of characters such as 執, where 幸 niè occurs in the modern form, is seen the imagery



of a shackle



. If 幸 (xìng, luck) is related in origin the sense may have derived from traditional notions found across cultures, captured by the 17<sup>th</sup> century German poet Friedrich Von Schiller in this phrase, "The iron chain and the silken cord are both equally bonds."



On the right side of 報 is 及 a hand leading a kneeling man, attributed the sense 治 (govern, cure, punish, administer, treat, etc.) by the Shuo Wen.



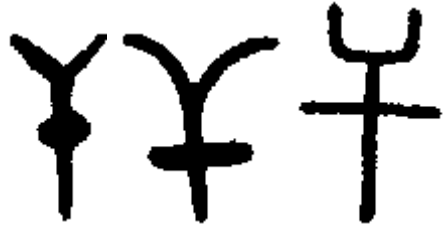
報 is thus a man lead to his fate – thus recompense, retribution, and by extension, a report on a person, etc. What a person gets by virtue of his merit.

Ancient forms of 報 include:

報 報 報  
報

Variants of 報 include:

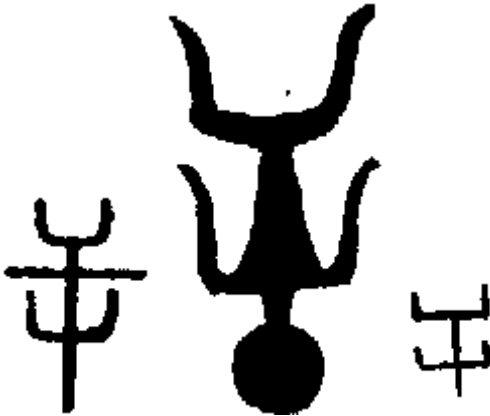
報 報 復 報 復  
復 復



**Note:** The battering Ram 干



and the imagery of an upside down man 𠂔



, it would seem, are ideographic cognates, at least insofar as in instances where the latter occurs in ancient script, it is seen that the modern form has 干.

Explanations given by Wieger are presented below. Even if the Wiegerian interpretations and etymology may not be entirely accurate in the light of later archeological findings, the study continues to provide valuable insights into how the forms were understood traditionally by the Chinese. It perhaps is

the only detailed etymological study of the language currently available in English.

## LESSON 102.

About the primitive 干 *kan*<sup>1</sup>, and the important series derived from it. An appendix will treat about the primitive 𠂔 *tsao*<sup>2</sup>.

**First series.** 干 *kan*<sup>1</sup>, 庚, 舌。

A 干 𠂔

**Kan**<sup>1</sup>. It represents a pestle. Compare L. 130. By extension, to grind, to destroy; morally, to oppose, to offend against; blunt arms, offence, injury, etc. — It is the 51th radical of a few unassorted characters. Phonetic series 22. It forms

𠂔 𠂔

**Ch'a**<sup>2</sup>. The 干 pestle in the mortar 臼 (L. 139). To pound, to pierce, to drive into or stick in. — Phonetic series 421.

旱 旱

**Han**<sup>4</sup>. The torrid and destroying 干 effect of the sun 日; drought, dryness.

庚 𥝌

**K'eng**<sup>1</sup>. To bark the rice by pounding it in a mortar. This was the main daily domestic work among the ancients. Compare L. 47 N.

康 𥝌

**K'ang**<sup>1</sup>. To 庚 decorticate 米 rice. **Chuan-chu**: 1. The chaff detached from the pounded grain, now 糠: 2. The repose that follows this hard work. — Phonetic series 623. It has nothing in common with 康 L. 44 E.

庸 𥝌

**Jung**<sup>1</sup>. Ordinary, common, as the 庚 decortication of rice, 用 for every-day use. — Phonetic series 624.

唐 𥝌

**T'ang**<sup>2</sup>. The 口 words that accompany the 庚 pounding of rice; idle gossip, noisy wrangle. —

Phonetic series 572.



Second series. 逆 I<sup>4</sup>, ni<sup>4</sup>.

D 𢦏 𢦏

I<sup>4</sup>. This character, says the Glose, is 干 doubled (though incompletely) to mean that the attack was repeated, because it met with resistance. Hence the derived meanings, to attack, to resist, opposition, obstacle. Now 逆. It forms

𢦏 𢦏  
𢦏 𢦏

Ch'ih<sup>4</sup>. To attack 𢦏 a man in his 广 house; to expel, to turn out of the house, to scold, to strike or cuff. Note the modern abbreviation, the only one used now. — Phonetic series 112.

𢦏 𢦏  
𢦏 𢦏

O<sup>4</sup>. To resist to somebody, to check 𢦏 him openly with 𢦏 cries and scoldings. The scribes changed 𢦏 into 𢦏 (L. 58 E), and this strange alteration was commonly admitted. See L. 72 F. — Phonetic series 470.

朔 𠄎

**Shuo<sup>4</sup>.** The new moon; when the 月 moon being 𠄎 opposite to the sun, refuses to receive its light; 从月, 从 𠄎, 會意。— Phonetic series 564.

歎 𠄎

**Ch'ieh<sup>4</sup>.** To have hiccup, suffocation, asthma, cough; 𠄎 an obstacle that impedes 欠 breathing (L. 99). It forms

厥 𠄎

**Ch'üeh<sup>4</sup>.** A steep acclivity 厂 (L. 59), the ascension of which 歎 puts out of breath. This character lost that meaning, and is now used as a demonstrative pronoun; 發聲之詞。— Phonetic series 673.

幸 𠄎

**Hsing<sup>4</sup>.** Fortunate, lucky. A man 夭 (L. 61 B, written 土), who gets over 𠄎 opposition, who triumphs over resistance; 从 𠄎, 从 夭, 會意。吉而免凶也。— Phonetic series 361. Not to be confounded with 幸 niah<sup>4</sup>, below G.

𠂔

干

𠂔

𠂔

**Ch'ien<sup>3</sup>.** To offend 干 (L. 102 A) a superior — or 二 (L. 2 G); offence, fault, crime; 干 上 爲 𠂔。罪也。 In the modern writing, 𠂔 on the top of different compounds is reduced to 立, that must be distinguished from 立 li<sup>4</sup>, L. 60 H. By extension, to attack, to face, etc. It forms

𦍋

𦍋

𦍋

**Jên<sup>2</sup>.** This character is composed nearly as 𦍋 (L. 102 D). It is 干 (L. 102 A) increased by one stroke. The idea is that of an offence repeated or aggravated, 犯之甚也。Derived meanings, relapse, recidivation, obduracy. See 南 nan<sup>2</sup>, L. 79 G. It forms the two important sub-series 幸 nioh<sup>4</sup> and 辛 hsin<sup>1</sup> (below).

Sub-series. 幸 nieh<sup>4</sup>.

G 𡥉 𡥈  
幸 幸

Nieh<sup>4</sup>. A man 大 (L. 60) who committed a 羊 crime; a criminal; 从大, 从羊, 合意。罪也。 Not to be confounded with 幸 hsing<sup>4</sup> (L. 102 D); both are now written in the same way. Not to be confounded with 辜 t'a<sup>4</sup> (L. 60 C). Note the derivatives

執 𡔁

**Chih<sup>2</sup>.** To apprehend 𡔁 (L. 11 E) a 幸 criminal; 捕罪人也。从𡔁、从幸、會意。By extension, to seize, to maintain, etc. — Phonetic series 601.

報 𡔁

**Pao<sup>4</sup>.** To repress 𡔁 (L. 55 C) 幸 evil-doers; 从幸、从𡔁、會意。懲罪人也。By extension, to denounce them, to state, to inform; hence the modern meanings, a report, an announcement, a gazette.

𡔁 𡔁

**I<sup>4</sup>.** To keep a watchful 目 eye (L. 158), over the 幸 criminals; vigilance; 从横目。从幸、會意。令吏將目捕罪人也。— Phonetic series 738.

囹

**Yü<sup>2</sup>.** A prison. The inclosure 口 where criminals 幸 are confined; 所以拘罪人。从口、从幸、會意。

𡔁 𡔁

**Chou<sup>1</sup>.** To flog 父 (L. 43 D) a 幸 criminal till he is 血 bleeding (L. 157). The scribes substituted 丸 to 父, and suppressed the 丿 of 血; then K'ang-hsi classified this character under 𡔁.

Second series: 夭 yao<sup>1</sup>.

B 夭 夭

**Yao<sup>1</sup>** A man who bends the head forward, in order to run, to jump, to march. By extension, to lean, to to incline, to hang, to rock, to shake. — Phonetic series 92. On the top of the compounds, 夭 sometimes becomes 土 in the modern writing (as 大, L. 60, fourth series), e.g. in 幸 *hsing<sup>4</sup>* L. 402, and 走 *tsou<sup>3</sup>* L. 442. 𦵏 *ch'iao<sup>2</sup>* L. 75 B. — Note 笑 *hsiao<sup>4</sup>*, to laugh. Etymologically, 竹 bamboos 夭 rocked by the wind; 竹得風, 如人之笑也。从竹、从夭、會意。 The spasmodic motion of the belly, when a fat Chinese is laughing.

海[hǎi]



**Ocean, Sea.** On the left is the



ideograph for water. On the right is 每



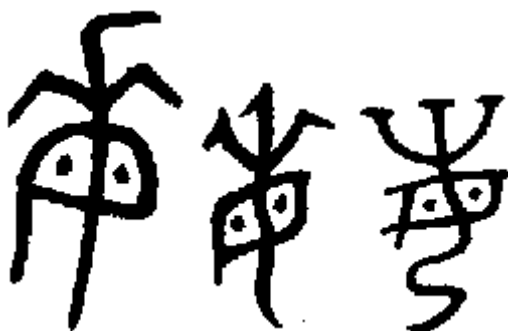
, the imagery of women with luxuriant hair.

Waves as luxuriant as the hair of a women. Or, the anthropomorphization of the oceans as the feminine.





The sprout      above the woman's head  
signify, instead of hair, the emergence of life, in such an



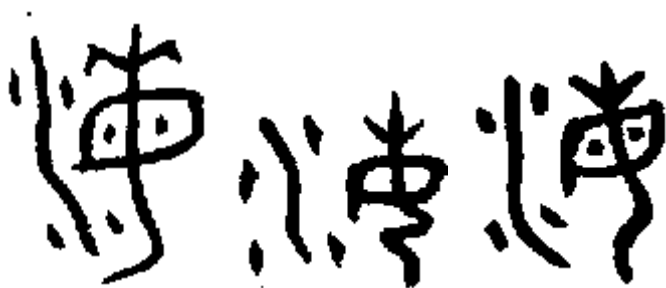
interpretation.



The image shows the seal script character for 毒 (poison). It is a stylized, cursive form with a prominent vertical stroke on the left and a complex, interlocking structure on the right.

is also interpreted as a lactating woman with prominent breasts.

Ancient forms include:

The image displays three ancient forms of the character 毒. The first form on the left is a highly stylized, cursive script. The middle and right forms are more structured, featuring a central vertical stroke with horizontal and diagonal strokes branching out, resembling a stylized plant or a complex geometric design.


 臺 [tái] Platform, tower,

**station, stand, an elevated platform, a terrace.** 臺灣

Taiwan.



The character originally referred to a tall tower which allowed for observation on all four sides. Shuowen decomposes the structure thus, 從至從高. From 至, the imagery of a bird flying downwards to the ground, and 高 the image of a tall tower. As a visual mnemonic, a tall tower on which birds perch; a high platform.


 [tái] I, we, a courteous way of saying 'you.' The

ancient dictionary, the Shuo Wen attributes the meaning 說[shuō , say, speak] to the character.

𠔁 說 𠔁 𠔁 𠔁 𠔁 𠔁

𠔁

"The 𠔁 mouth exhaling a breath. By extension, to speak in order to make one's self known; I, one's self; 說也," writes Wieger.

The character was used in reference to some stars in the Great Bear constellation.

"The character is now mostly used as a conventional abbreviation for 臺," notes Karlgren.

合

[hé] **Join, combine, bring together, shut.**

𠔁

From 𠔁 [jǐ] which is the "Notion of union, of assemblage, of a junction of different elements, represented by three lines," according to Wieger; "Three strokes running together," according to Karlgren. Together with the ideogram for a

mouth 𠔁. Expressions 𠔁 in harmonious assemblage

𠔁

"Picture of the lid of an opening - analogous to 同," interprets Karlgren.



Turn over. A hand turning a flat surface over. Or, the movement of the hand, in turning something over, abstracted.



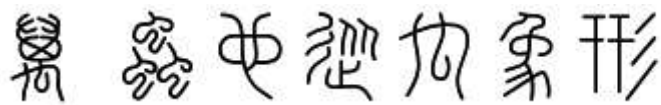
**Ten thousand, myriad.** The picture of a

scorpion. The scorpion's form being a highly myriadized one;

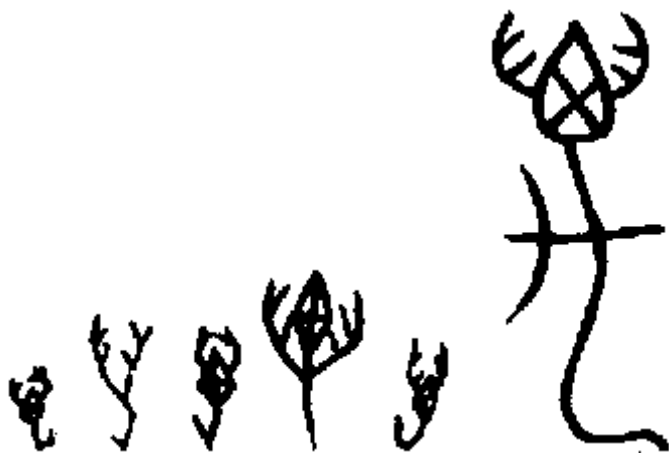
in the sense that it is separated from a pure, primordial simplicity. Ten thousand is the number in Chinese cosmology that is used to refer to the myriad of manifested things. Or,

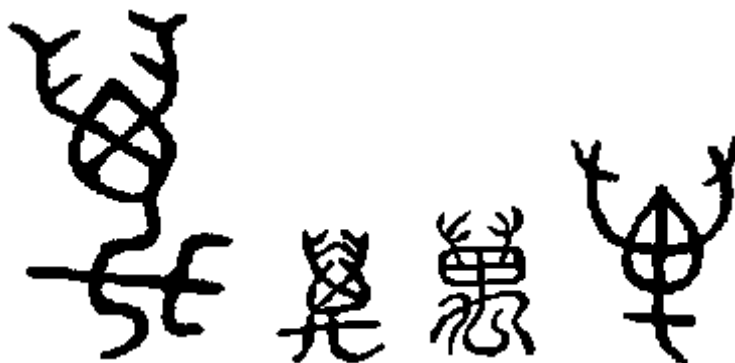


more accurately expressed, is the symbol used for such a concept as well as the number ten thousand.



says the Shuo Wen.





利

[li] **Benefit, profit.** The imagery of grains 禾 and

a sword or knife 刀 (dāo). Ideographically, to harvest the fields, and by extension, benefits, profit, etc.

新科新利  
利利利利






再 [zài] 𠂔 𠂕 𠂖 𠂗 𠂘

**Again, still, furthermore.**

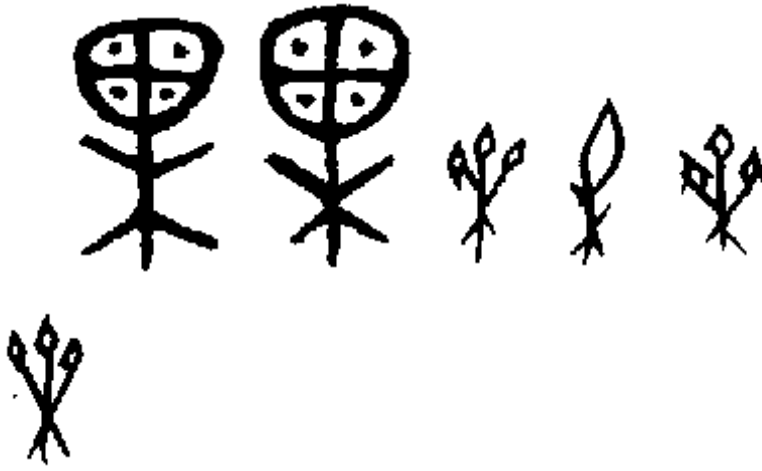
Imagery of an arm balance. A dualistic movement fluctuating between two related states. "A 二 second 巾 weighing, equal to the first one," says Wieger.

Variants include:

𠂔 𠂕 𠂖 𠂗 𠂘 𠂙

果 [guǒ]    Fruit. The image of a fruit on a tree.

果 木 實 也 巡 木 象 果 形 在 木 上 二



Variants include:



物

[wù] **Thing, matter.** Symbolic of the myriad

things, according to the Shuo Wen.

物 鬲 物 屯 半 爲 大 物 天 地 上 數 起 於 南 半 故 從 半 多 聲



From the image of an 牛



(niú) ox, and 勿 (wù), the image of a flag. The 牛 ox is that which is used to plough and fecund earth, and hence perhaps was associated with the generation of matter which follows the pairing of Heaven with Earth, in Chinese cosmology. Perhaps symbolic of larger forms of matter that drive the movement of Heaven and Earth.



勿 is said to be the image of a flag with a central pole and three leaves, has now the meaning *no, not*. "Said to depict a pennon, a signal flag: stop!," says Karlgren. Flags were used to demarcate administrative boundaries.

Flags signify a state.

The myriad dynamic states 勿 of the matter-principle animator 牛, resting in the various kinds of matter manifested. 勿 might as well have been symbolic of the fluctuant states of matter.

真

[zhēn] **True, truth.** Sinologists theorize that the

presentday form may have derived from ancient forms such

真

as 真 which have 匕 at the top in the place of 十. A Taoist immortal changing form 匕 and ascending to the Heavens says a scholastic commentator. The upper portion of the character shows the Taoist immortal 匕, and the lower portion is variously interpreted as a vessel, a Taoist crucible, the vehicle or chariot by which the Taoist is ascending, etc.

真 儼入變形而登天也 𠂔 匕 目 乚 八 𠂔 己 衆 載 上

Forms interpreted as ancient variants of 眞 include:



**Notes:** The word phrase 眞人 [zhēnrén], literally True Man, is the traditional term for a Daoist immortal. “Perfect Genuineness of nature being characteristic of the Taoist 眞人 Genii, the scope at which the Taoist transformation of man aims,” says Wieger.


K 直 直

**Chih<sup>2</sup>**. Perfectly right, not curved in the least; 从 乚. 从 十. 从 目. 會 意. The eyes having looked at something, did not discover any deviation. — Phonetic series 335. — Note the right way of writing this character. The modern engravers cut 乚, so that one may believe it is composed of two strokes 𠄎. The scribes often change it into a single horizontal line 直, etc.

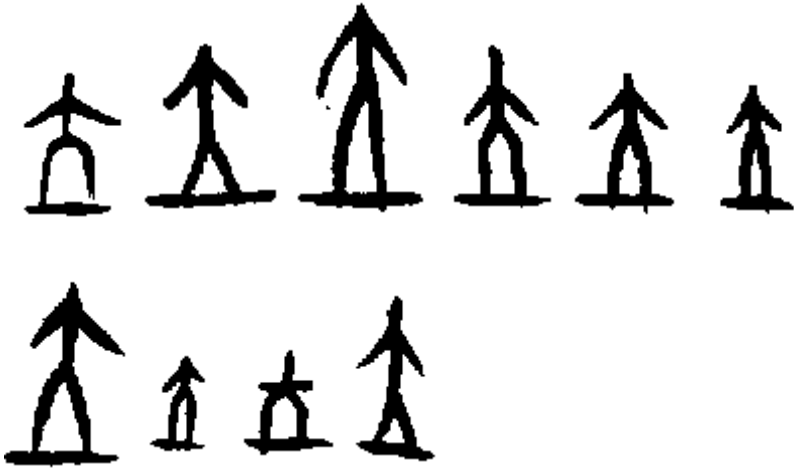
L 眞 眞

**Chên<sup>1</sup>**. Perfectly true; 从 直. 从 兀. 會 意. Something having been exposed on a pedestal. 直 ten eyes could not find any fault in it... The 一 of the pedestal was mingled with the lower part of 乚. — Perfect genuineness of nature

being the characteristic of the Taoist 真人 Genii, the scope at which the Taoist transformation 乚 (L. 30 D) of man aims, the Taoists replaced 十 by 乚 at the top of chên (contraction). 从 乚. 从 直. 从 兀. 會 意. The calligraphic remarks made about 直, are to be made here also. — Phonetic series 509.

立 [lì]  **Stand.** The imagery of a person

standing on the ground. The 一 below the person is interpreted as the ground. Ancient forms include:



立 𠂔 𠂕 𠂖 𠂗 𠂘 一 立 二

, says the Shuo Wen.

別 [bié] 𠂔 Separate, separated, other;

**don't, other, another, leave, differentiate.** On the left is the image of a skeleton with the skull and shoulder bones. On the right is the imagery of a sword or a knife. "A 刀 knife cleaving 另 bones," says Karlgren.

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 . To

separate dissecting, is the sense Shuo Wen attributes.

Note that 另(ling) has the meaning 'other, left-over, extra, besides, etc.' And is described as the bones left after the flesh has been taken away.

場 [chǎng] 場 場 Site, field. On the

left is the ideogram[土, tǔ] for 'Earth, a mound of earth, place, region, etc.' On the right side is an ideogram 易 showing an





active energy mechanism's expansion.



. The top portion of that character 易 is interpreted as the Sun, and the lower portion as an ideogram apparently denoting energy's expansion attributed to it. 易[yáng] plays a phonetic role here, according to the Shuo Wen.

The region 土 of a particular kind of field's activity 易.

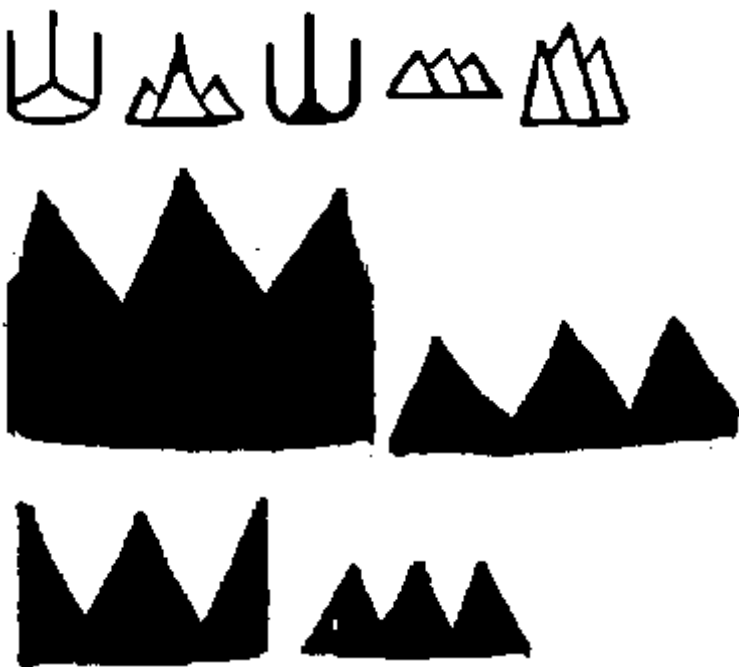


Note that the Shuo Wen attributes to the character a meaning related to the sacrifice to divine spirits, while also attributing

to the character senses such as an unploughed mountain field, a treated paddy field, etc.



mountain range, with three peaks shown.





通 [tōng] 通 Connect, go through,

understand thoroughly, logical, coherent.

通達通達通達  
通達通達

通達通達通達通達通達通達

, says

the Shuo Wen using the character 達(dá, reach, arrive) to attribute meaning to 通.



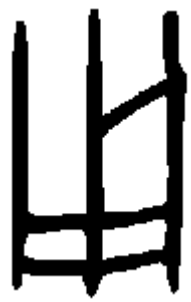
Composed of 辵 which symbolizes movement and 甬



, which according to the Shuo Wen symbolizes blooming.




Thorough evolutionary movement, along the central axis, as



suggested by

, ideographically



The solar symbol was also the symbol of gold , or the goal of the magnum opus in certain ancient traditions, including the Western alchemical tradition.

Variants include:

通 通 通 通 通

聲  [shēng] Sound, voice, musical

**sound.** A hand holding an instrument, striking a rock chime, and below which is the image of an ear.



**Notes:**

聲 音 也 從 耳 殸 聲 殸 籀 文 聲

, says the Shuo Wen explaining the character 聲. Musical



sound. From the imagery of an ear , and from which is a Zhou dynasty calligraphy version of the character



for a musical Chime stone .

聲 樂 石 也 從 石 殸 象 縣 鐘 上 形 殸 所 已 聲 上 也 古 潘 母 音 氏 伶 聲



Also, note that is a character representing, pictographically, a stone on a mountain cliff, according to the Shuo Wen.

尸 山 尸 屯 杜 厂 止 二 口 象 形

殳 is interpreted a hand holding a spear or a lance. A weapon used to kill, according to traditional sources. In general, it may be thought of as a hand holding an instrument.

殳 己 枝 肱 尸 屯 周 禮 殳 己 禮 巾 八 觚 居 支 二 尺 建 於 兩 車 旅 賁 己 卷 驪 遼 又 夕 聲 尸 殳 止 屬 皆 從 殳



Ancient forms of 殳 include



**Note:** While the more ancient forms of 殳 suggest the ideogram was a hand holding a weapon, there have been different understandings of the form in traditional Chinese society.



Wieger says:

A 几 𠂆

**Shu<sup>2</sup>, ch'u<sup>2</sup>.** The jerky flapping of a short wing; 鳥之短羽飛几几也。像形。Then, in general, any rhythmical and jerky motion. The derivatives of 几 must be carefully distinguished from those of 乃 L. 19, and 几 L. 20; in the modern writing, this distinction is not easy to be made. Forms

B 鳧 𩇛

**Fu<sup>2</sup>.** A wild duck; the bird 鳥 which flies 几 heavily; 野鴨也, 从鳥, 从几, 會意。鴨羽短, 飛几几也。

C 朵 𦵏  
朶

**To<sup>3</sup>.** The balancing of twigs and flowers. It is used as a specificative of flowers, 一朵花 i-to hua. — Phonetic series 240. Note the modern form 朵.

Second series: 攴.

D 攴 𠂆

**Shu<sup>2</sup>, ch'u<sup>2</sup>.** The right hand 手 making a jerky 几 motion; to strike; 以杖殊人也。By extension, a stick, a ferule. — It is the 79th radical. Phonetic series 51. Note the following derivatives

芟

**Shan<sup>4</sup>;** 刈艸也。从艸, 从攴, 會意。Jerky motion of the scythe that cuts the grass; to mow.

信 [xìn] 信 Belief, confidence, letter,

**message, word, information.** A man 亻 (人 rén) and his intent or word 言 (yán, words).

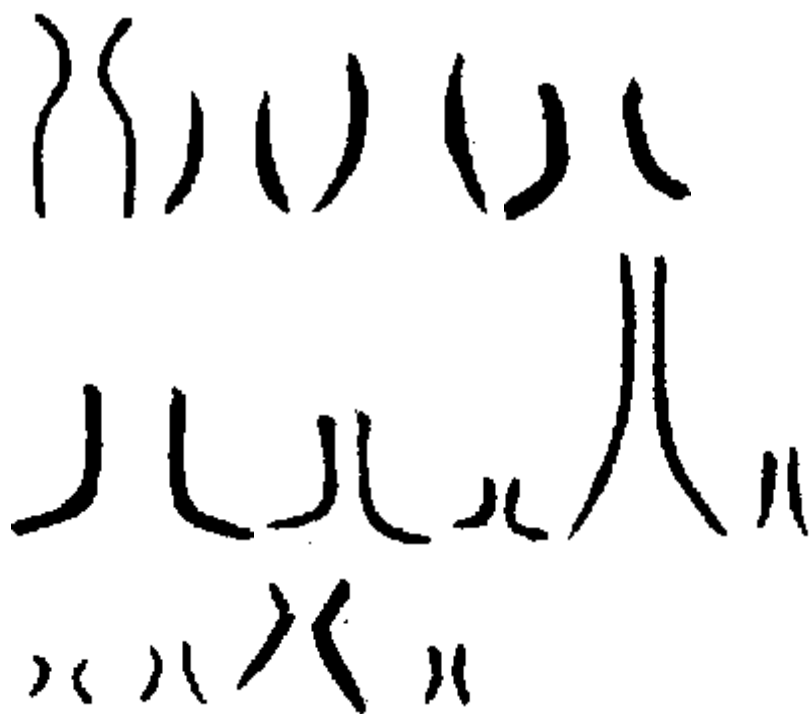
Variants include:

𠂔 𠂔 信 信 信

八 [bā] Eight.

八 八 八 八 八 八 八 八 八 八

Symbol of separation or division, according to the Shuo Wen. Corresponds to the Number of Guas of the Ba Guas. An initial stage of myriadization in Chinese concepts of cosmogenesis; corresponding to the generation of what apparently are eight fundamental patterns.



A variant of interest is:



命 [mìng]

Life, fate, destiny. The

character 令 [lìng, command, decree] together with 口 [kǒu, mouth] make up this ideogram.

令 has the meanings cause, command, decree, etc. In its ancient forms it shows a man kneeling obedient to a higher

order.





命 has the imagery of a mouth 口 added to ,  
 signifying man's conformant nature to the expressed decrees  
 of fate, destiny, etc. The idea of human life being a



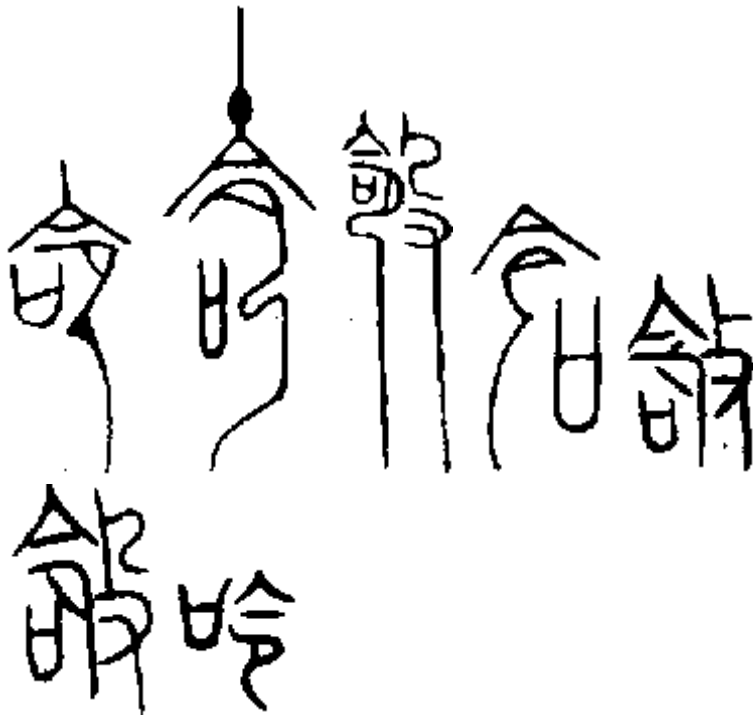
conformant part of a higher order's expression 口



Ancient forms include:



And variants include:

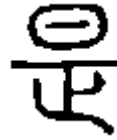


提 [tí]      提 lift, raise; [dī]      提 ward

off, defend, hold in the hand.

On the left is 扌 (手, shǒu, hand) symbolizing action, and on the right is 是 [shì] here symbolizing an uplifting restrain.

Remember that 是 [shì] is the verb ‘to be’, the symbol for ‘is,



right, true, etc.’ 是 has ancient forms as



and is

explained in its modern form, such “What was 正 controlled at 日 sun's light... truthfulness, reality, existence," by Wieger.

The 正 and 日 together here suggest a restrain to a higher principle. 正 is from the image of a foot and a line, and interpreted thus by Wieger: "To 止 stop at the 一 line ...without going astray." The feet symbolize grounding, restrain, etc.

提 this is an action 手 that is uplifting-restraining 是 in nature.



市

[shì]

市

**bartering goods** . The form is interpreted as market tent □, or the outer frames of a marketplace in the middle of which is

3

which is interpreted as an ancient form of

及

[及,jí, 'as well as, and, on to,' imagery of a hand

reaching to and grabbing a person] by the Shuo Wen.

may symbolize here the mutual exchange of goods, or the interaction through goods. Or, even just where people 'reach out' to others.

所覺覺所止也亦豈迴轉門迴之象特相及也之古方及南上者聲



In 市, the triplicate enfolding may symbolize an active

evolution, resulting from the interaction 𠂇. Note that it resembles the radical depicting a sprout 艹[chè, half of 艸]



(cǎo, grass)] .

Note: The word phrase 城市 [chéng shì] means ‘city, town, etc.’

Variants of the character 市 include:

市 市 市 市 市  
市

Another possible interpretation is that 冂 are the outer boundaries of a city, or a state, and at the center of which are shown patterns of interaction and growth. A city is socially located at the center of a place. And, the marketplace, is, socially, at the center of a settlement.

**Notes:**

冂 邑 外 譚 上 郊 郊 外 譚 上 野 野 外 譚 上 林 林 外 譚 上 冂 象 諸 亦 屯 尺  
冂 上 屬 皆 從 冂

冂

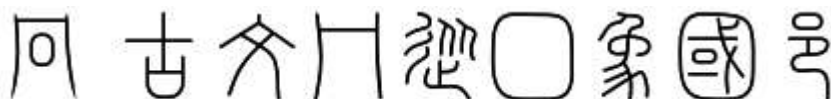
[jiōng, referred to as the 同字框 tóngzìkuàng, or the frame of the character 同] is the 13<sup>th</sup> of the 214 Kang Xi radicals; considered by the Shuo Wen as cognate to 同

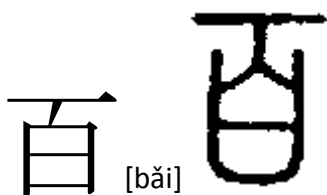


[jiōng] [jiǒng]. 冂 is said by the Shuo Wen to be the outer portion of a city.



And 冂, the Shuo Wen says, is an ancient form of 國, the circle inside resembling the walls of a city within the country. "Border regions; waste land near the frontier -- etymologically the same word as 冂...enlarged by 口 city wall," says Karlgren.



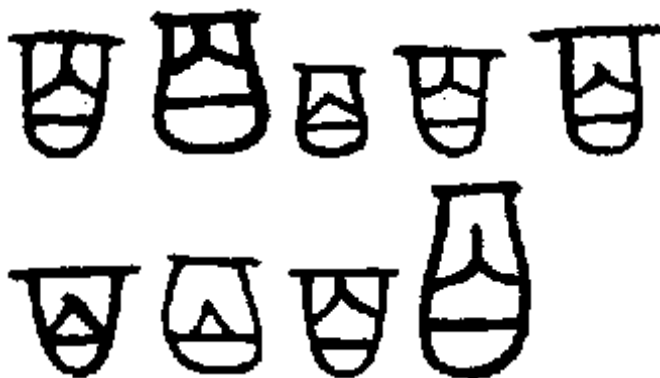


[bǎi]

**Hundred.** Ancient forms show a

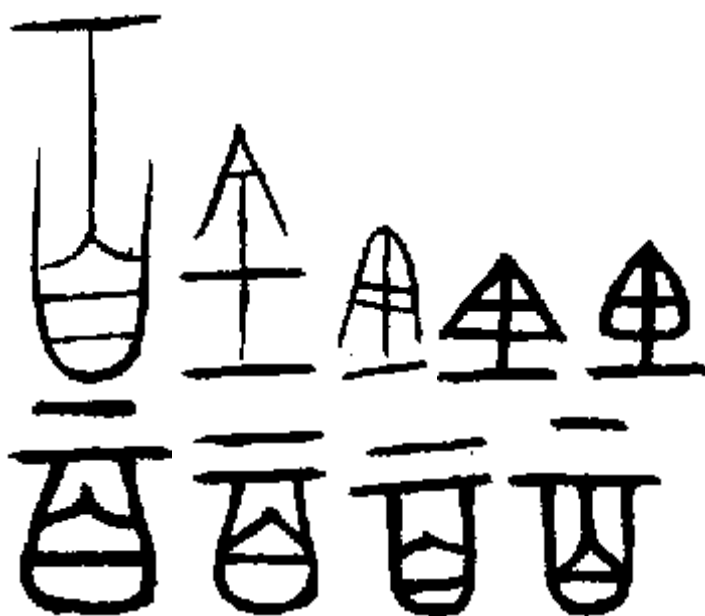
container, with a triangle in the middle. The containing principle of the first hundred numbers, perhaps. Or, perhaps the first hundred numbers envisaged as a self-contained unit. The triangle can suggest ordering, and is considered symbolic of the fire principle when turned upwards.

R Allendy describes hundred as the part of the part, the microcosm of the macrocosm. Number individualizing the part of a whole, according to another source. Concepts of ordinal perfection, unity, etc., are seen associated with the numbers 1, 10, 100, etc.





Variants include:



𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

件 [jiàn] 件 item; term; condition;

**correspondence; document.**

"The idea is represented by a representative of the two nobler categories, a 亻 man and an 牛 ox; 从人, 从牛, 会意。," says Wieger.

“分也從人從牛牛大物故可分,” says the Shuo Wen. The idea

seems that the larger livestock as oxen



were the

first items divided between men , and terms, conditions, documents, were eventually maintained for the purpose.





**Note:** A closely related form is attributed the meaning ‘neat classification,’ by the Shuo Wen.



The right hand side of the Shuo Wen character is an Ox’s cry.




性 [xìng] Nature, character,

**sex, gender.**

生 born of the 心 heart, ideographically. 生[shēng, give birth, life] is a growing plant, and 心 (xīn) is the image of the heart. The nature of thing, that which manifests from the heart.

**Note:**

性 人 上 易 气 性 善 者 也 從 心 主 聲

性 represents man's Yang qi, which is of a good-nature, according to the Shuo Wen. The form 情 [qíng, feeling, emotion] is interpreted as man's Yin qi, having the nature of desire, by the Shuo Wen.

情 人 上 舍 气 忄 能 善 也 從 心 青 聲

A variant of 性 found amongst seal forms appears as:

𤝱

數 [shù] 數 number, figure [shǔ] count, be reckoned as, enumerate, list.

數 計 也 從 支 婁 聲



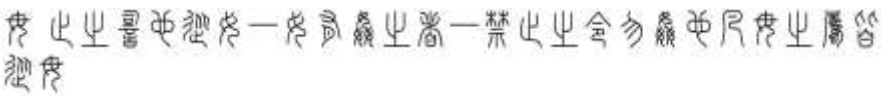
On the left of this character is an ideogram [lóu], now attributed the meaning 'go bad.' "The seal has: 母中女: 'a woman in seclusion', says the commentator," says Karlgren. "Woman 女 confined, enclosed 中 in the 母 prison of the gynecium; for ever idle; useless, etc; 母中女, 空虚之意。" says Wieger. Both the explanations seem to draw from the Shuo Wen, which says:

婁 空也 從 女 從 中 女 婁 空也 婁 一 白 婁 務 墨 也



The character 母[wú, not, no, must not, don't] is the depiction of "A woman placed under lock and key," according to Wieger. "A fettered woman," according to Karlgren. Women who were prohibited, and fettered,

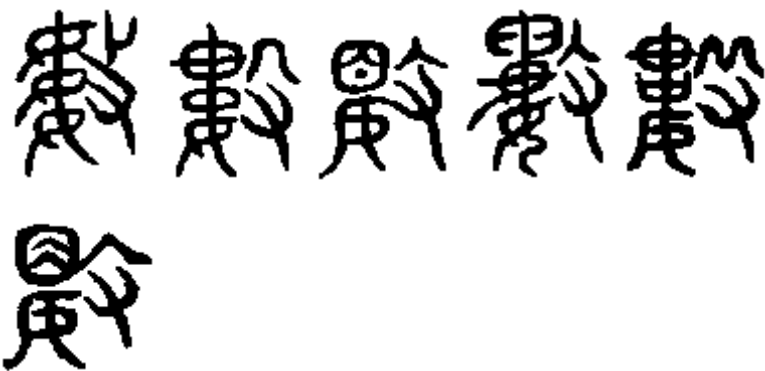
possibly for crimes of adultery. A cross-mark made over the imagery of a women.



On the right side of 數 [shù], is an ideogram suggesting an action involving force 攴 (pū, 'beat'), a hand holding an instrument or a weapon.

The concept of the number, it seems, were understood by the ancient Chinese as the ordering principles of nature – mechanisms which enforce 攴 an order upon the chaotic, lawless, primordial manifestations in nature 婁.

Ancient variants of 數 include:




 [shū]
 Writings, book, script,

**letter, document, style of calligraphy.**

The top portion of the character is a hand holding a stylus 聿 . And the lower portion is 者 (zhě, ideographically interpreted as a substance manifesting its nature) . In the middle are seen two lines, 二, as part of the character 聿 , and they are sometimes interpreted as strips of bamboo.

The hand holding a stylus, which runs through two 二 may as well symbolize the creative intent emerging through the hierarchies and making manifest its nature 者. 者 was later reduced to 日 .

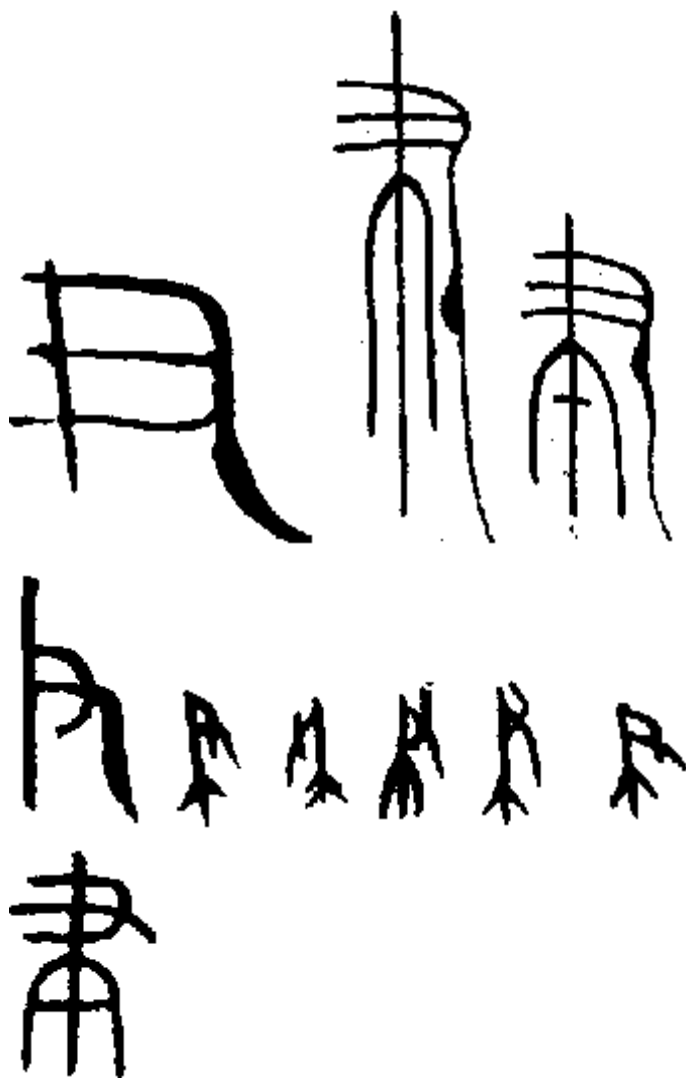
As a mnemonic, 者 may be thought of as a seal tablet being baked after markings were made on it.



The character 聿 [yù] is interpreted as a hand with

a writing instrument, a hand holding a pen, etc., and the ancient forms of the ideogram include:



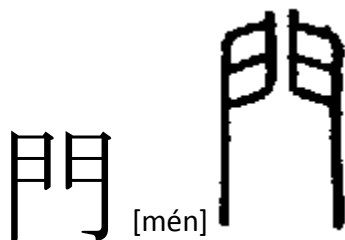


Ancient forms of書include:

書書書書書  
書書書書書

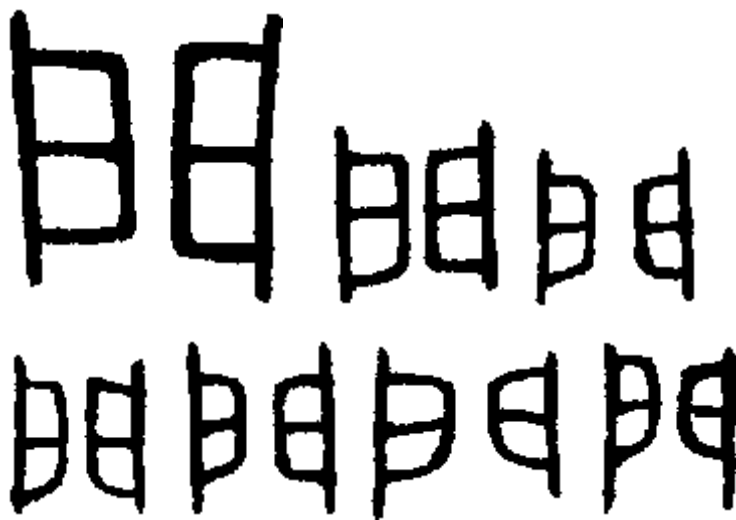


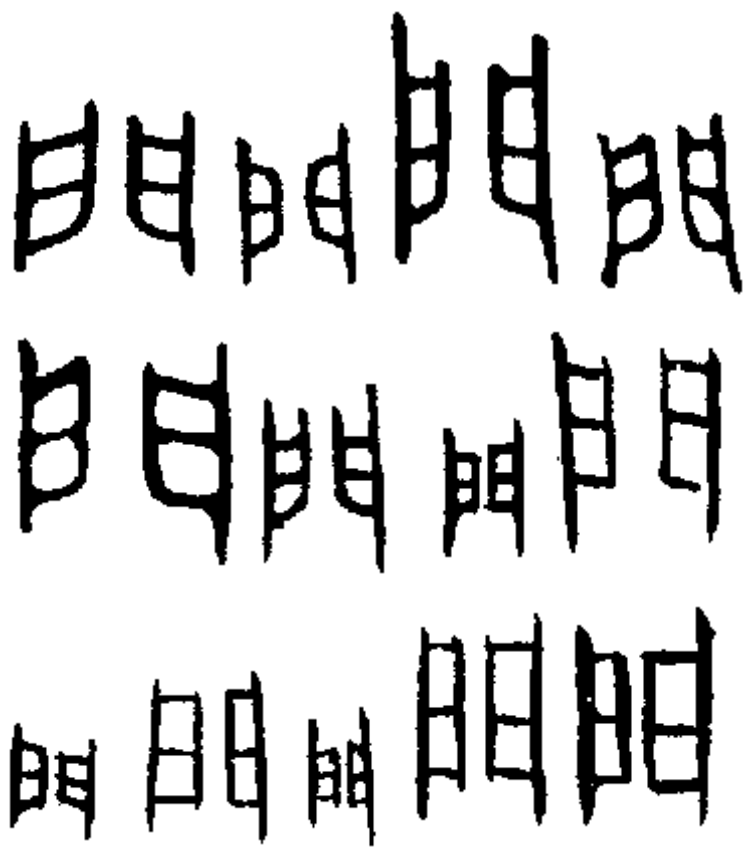
And variants include:


 [mén] Door, doorway, gate,












**opening.** The imagery of the two leaves of a door. An extended sense of the word 門 is things that go together, like family, category, school of thought, etc.

Ancient forms include:





Variants include:

更 [gèng] 𠂇 Furthermore [gēng]

**Experience, to undergo, change, alter, night watch.**

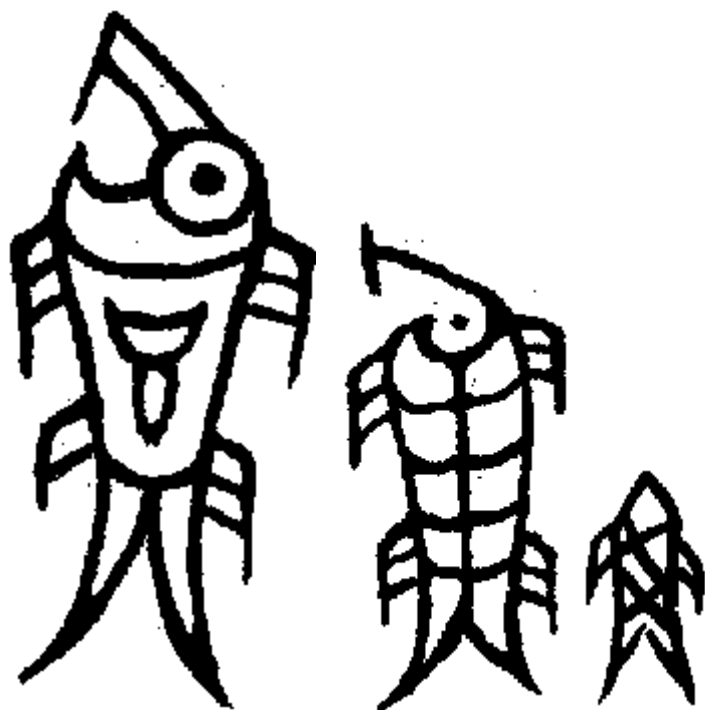


A hand holding an instrument 支 , stoking a fireplace 丙. To intensify, furthen.

"The seal has 丙 and 支, interpretation uncertain," says Karlgren. The difficulty of interpretation is likely due to our insufficient understanding of forms such as 丙. The Wenlin, for instance, says 丙 is the "Picture of a fish tail." However, ancient forms strongly suggest that the ideogram 丙 was in ancient times understood as a fireplace. The character 炳 [bǐng] has the meaning 'bright, splendid.' Observe that the



fish tail in the ancient ideogram for a fish



were



in later forms abstracted to the symbol for fire 火. This abstraction has found its way into present day writing as well, where the symbol for a fish is 魚. A seal variant for the



character for fish appears as

Ancient forms and variants of the of the character 丙[bǐng, 3<sup>rd</sup>  
of the 10 Heavenly Stems 天干] include:

丙 丙 丙 丙 丙

丙 丙 丙 丙

丙 丙 丙 丙

丙 丙 丙 丙 丙 丙 丙



, says the

Shuo Wen, describing the character 更, attributing the meaning 'change' to it.

Ancient forms and variants of 更 include:



四支

四  
三  
二  
一

題<sub>[tí]</sub> Topic,

**subject, title.** That which actively restrains the content of a discussion, or an article, the topic, subject, title - expressed

through 是(shì, is)



which is an active

manifestation's 日



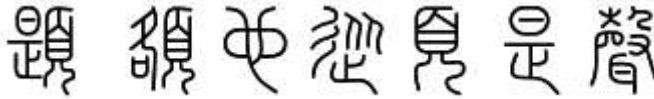
rectifying restrain 正



and 頁




(yè, head) which contributes directly to the ideographic sense.



"Forehead; frontispiece, heading; theme, thesis, proposition; inscription; write, pronounce, mention," says Karlgren.

Variants include:



路 

[lù]

Road, path, way sequence,

**logic, sort, grade, class.** The character on the left in this ideogram is 足[zú, foot]. The most ancient forms of 足 show



the lower leg, or the leg as a whole



. Later forms evolved into abstractions as



, etc. The mouth may be interpreted as that which expresses the intent of movement,

and the circle, as that which has an ordering impact on the movement driver. The character denotes sufficiency, as the leg allows one to stand, and to move with independence, that is, to be self-sufficient, in a sense. And, as a component, 足 conveys a sense of movement, as is associated with the leg – the movement driver of the human system.

足 人 止 足 𠂔 𠂔 體 二 𠂔 止 𠂔

Shuowen makes a clear distinguish between the sense of the character 足 and the character 止 [zhǐ, stop, halt, detain, suppress, prohibit, etc] which is the image of a foot.

止 二 基 𠂔 象 𠂔 木 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

止 is described as the foundational part of a system, the ideogram resembling the form of plants growing, as the foot is rooting to the ground, in its nature; while 足 is described as that which is at the lower portion of the system, the leg.

On the right hand side of 路 is the ideogram for restrained movement 久 (zhǐ, imagery of a foot pointing downwards) and 口 (kǒu, mouth) which signifies expression.

路

Thus, the ideogram 路, in its whole, suggests movement 足 restrained 久 to an expression pattern 口 –

path, road, grade, logic, sort, etc.

道也從足從各臣鉉等曰言道路人各有適也, says the Shuo Wen.

# 每

[měi] **every**. As an adverb: **frequently; often;**

**whenever.**

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 二 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

The Shuo Wen form of the character is composed of the

image of a sprout 𠂔 and the image of a woman 𠂔. The

character 𠂔, which is now 母 [mǔ, mother] is the image of a woman with the breasts shown prominently. Said also to be the image of a woman nursing a child.

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

The sprout 𠂔, in the ideographic context, may contribute to the sense – that which emerges from the feminine. Note

that the cosmos itself is envisaged as a feminine principle fecundated by a cosmic male principle, in many ancient traditions, and such a concept may have led to the association of the sense 'every' with the ideogram – from where all life springs.

Another theory is that the ancient forms show a women grooming her hair, putting *every* strand in its place. The character for 'beauty' 美 and shares a similar sound as 每.

Note that this is the right hand side character in 海 [hǎi,

ocean, sea]



– which allows for an ideographic interpretation of the word as the waters 𣶒 which are mother-like 每 and at the origin of the living.

"Already from the earliest times applied to a homophonous abstract word: each, every; constantly," says Karlgren on 每.

“The original meaning of 每 was "growing plants", from 艸 'grass' and 母 mǔ ('mother') phonetic,” says Wenlin.

Ancient forms of 每 include:





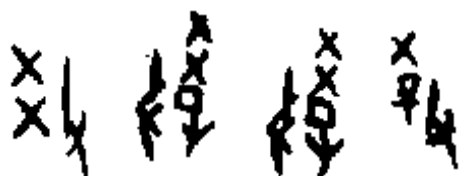
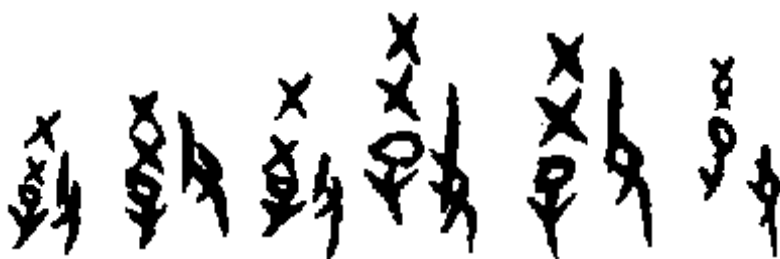


教 [jiāo] **teach** [jiào] **religion, instruction,**

**teaching, teach.**

The presentday form of the ideogram has been interpreted as from 孝 (xiào, filial piety), 𠂔(支 pū) 'beat.' “孝 xiào 'filial piety', made of 𠂔(老 lǎo) 'old' and 子 (zǐ) 'child', means to respect and obey ones elders; this is TAUGHT by 𠂔(支 pū) beating, according to the most enlightened teaching methods,” says Wenlin.

Ancient forms of 教 however were as:



The 爻 [yáo] which appears in the ancient forms is thought to be a symbolic representation of the interaction of Yin and Yang.



They are used to refer to the solid and broken lines of the trigrams. “组成八卦的长短横” --新法编排汉语词典. The

陽爻[yáng yáo] are the unbroken lines, as in ☰; and the 陰爻[yīn yáo] are the broken lines, as in ☷. Wieger interprets the presence of the form 爻 in the ancient writings of 教 as abstracting the interaction between the student and the teacher, "mutual action and reaction 交也; influence; symmetrical disposition, network, etc."

Another interpretation the ancient forms allow is the effort



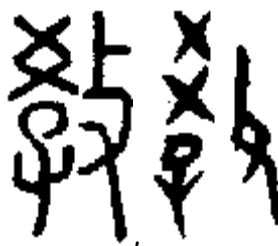
expended to make apparent the patterns of change



in nature . This is often done

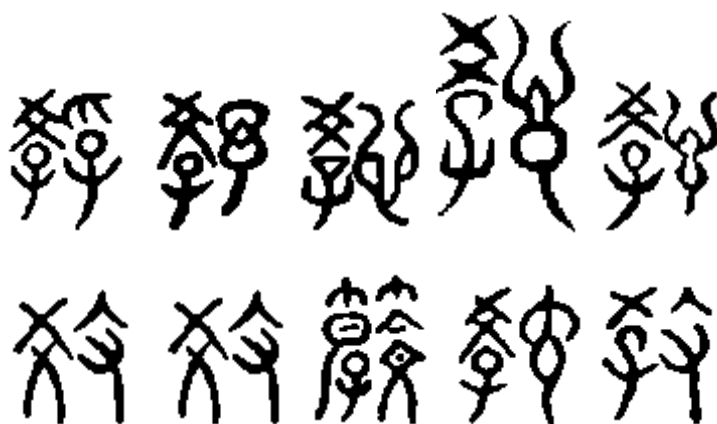


for the sake of a child who strives to comprehend them



And hence the forms , etc.

Variants of 教 include:



# 放

[fàng] **Set off, release, lay aside, send away,**

**let someone have his way, to place, put in, send away.**

放 逐 也 從 支 方 聲 凡 放 止 屬 皆 從 放



To put in effort 支 (支 pū, beat, ) to free a boat anchored either to the shore, or tied to another boat as part





of a pontoon . From such an interpretation derives the meanings set off, release, lay aside, etc. The sense of the ideogram may equally apply in reverse, as a boat being tied to a pontoon structure, or to an anchor on a shore – and hence the meanings to put in, to place, etc.

六 𠂔 介

number, also easily divisible, that comes after four; 四 marked with a dot. Note that in the other simple even numbers, the divisibility is also indicated: 二 two; 八 eight," says Wieger.



卯易上數舍變終卯正終八繼入八尺卯上屬皆繼卯

The Shuo Wen notes that the character is formed of  入 [rù, to enter] and 八 [bā, eight] which signifies division. Note



that the ancient ideogram for Seven  abstracts the idea of division or penetration of a passive layer by an active principle. So, we might have here, for six, an ideogram

suggesting an entry  into a state of division 八.

A number emerging from a yang state, changing into yin, becomes 6. A rectifying restrain on the factors that constitute 六, results in the number principle of 八. That is, to interpret the Shuo Wen explanation, the thought contain wherein seems obscure to us, in our paradigm and worldview.

Or, factors entering  a state of division . The even number before eight.

As pure ideograms, the modern form and the ancient form both indicate its divisibility: of the number six, by two

 and by three . The ideograms for even numbers are symmetrical, while those of the odd numbers higher than three 三 are not.





計 [jì] 計

Count, calculate, compute; plot, plan;

meter, gauge. The ten 十 counting words 言.

計 會 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 十

Variants include:

𠂔 𠂔

至 𠂔

[zhì]

to, until; till; extremely,

**most, arrive, reach** 甚至 [shènzhì] even, to the point of.

The ancient forms show a bird flying down to the ground, says the Shuo Wen.

𠂔 鳥飛從高二 𠂔 地也 從一 一 地也 象形 不二 𠂔 二 來 也 尺  
𠂔 上 屬 谷 從 𠂔

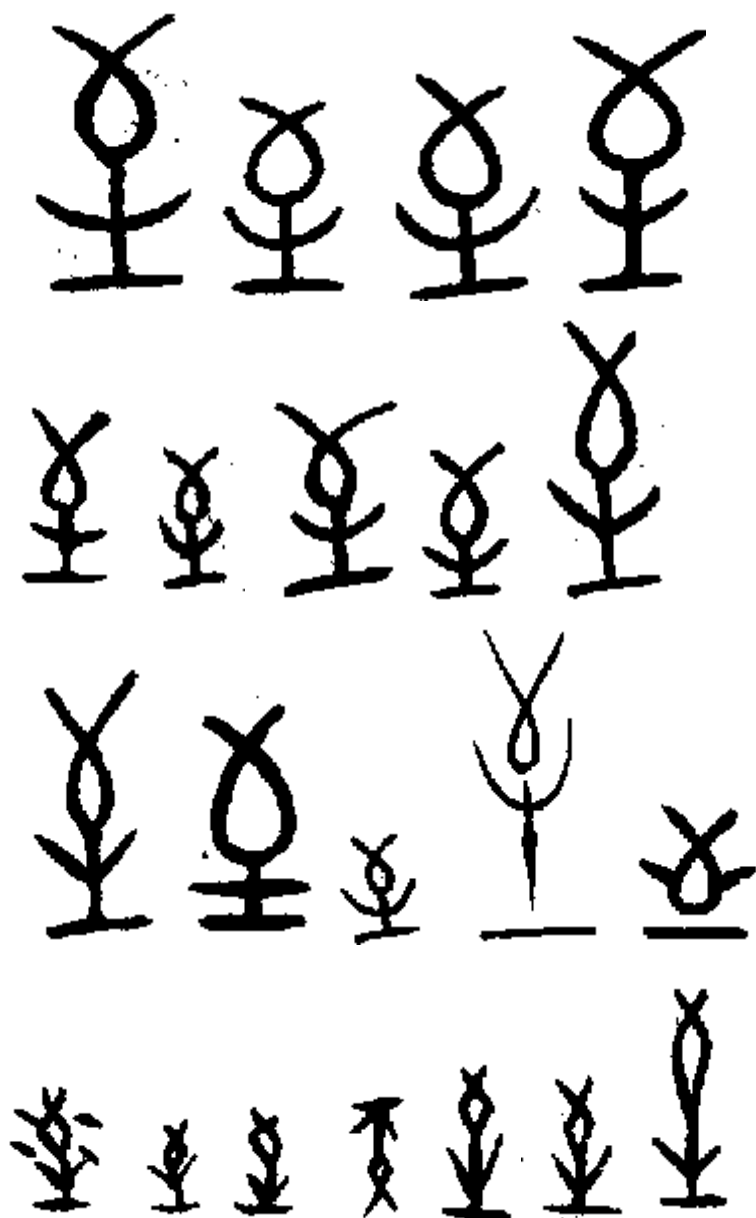
"Picture of an arrow that has reached its target," says Lindqvist. “至 was originally exactly 矢 shǐ 'arrow' upside-

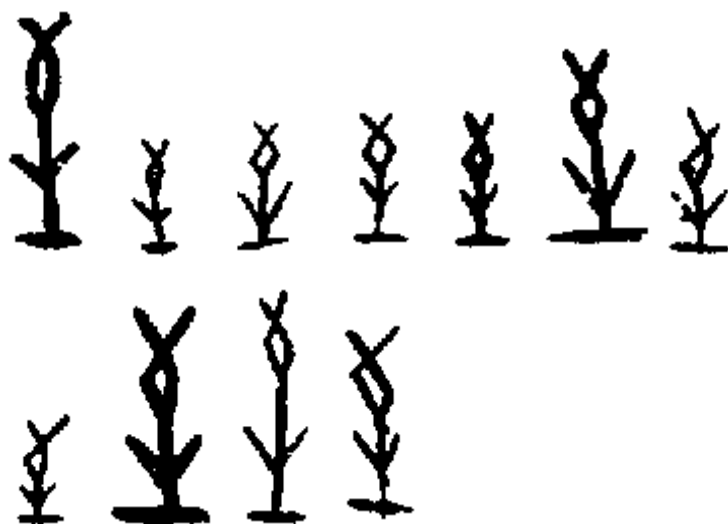


down above a horizontal line,” says Wenlin.

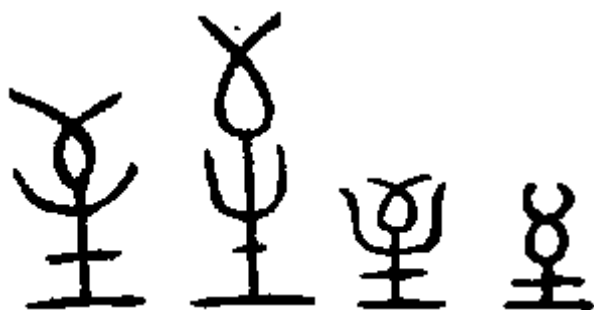
A bird that had flown upwards, now flying downwards to the earth, says the Shuo Wen.

A bird, or an arrow *reaching to* its target. A bird *reaching* down to, or *arriving at*, its target on the ground, is at an *extremity* in its flight path.





Variants include:



The ancient imagery for an arrow was like,



directions 十, thus, 'established,' 'rooted,' 'ancient,' etc. In Chinese cosmology, the space of the Cosmos is thought of as being 10 directional. Shuo Wen also suggests 十 is symbolic of expanse along all directions.

故, is thus the action 攴 which causes a thing to establish or express itself firmly in reality. The Ideogram 故 [gù] means cause. A man 人 and his action 攴 creating an established expression in reality 古.

"A 人 man and his 故 cause," says Karlgren.

"Compare 作 zuò which also means 'do, make'. It seems that there used to be only one character, 作, with two slightly different pronunciations, but both meaning the same thing. Then 'comparatively recently' a new character 做 was invented for one of the pronunciations. Ironically, the two pronunciations have become the same in Mandarin (though not in all dialects), but we have to deal with two characters. Use 作 for 'making' abstract things, 做 for 'making' concrete objects," says Wenlin.

原 [yuán]  Originally, Original.

Water flowing out from its source in a cliff.

泉[quán] is attributed the meanings, a spring, fountain, etc.  
 White 白, bubbling spring water水. "Originally a picture of a  
 basin from which water flows; remade into: 白 (white:) pure  
 水 water," says Karlgern.




























The Shuo Wen says  was a seal calligraphy variant of





原 篆 文 從 泉

“篆文從泉臣鉉等曰今別作源,” says another source, describing 原.

In 原[yuán], the 水 of 泉 quán appears abbreviated in a form resembling 小. Remember that 厂 is the ideogram for a cliff.



In presentday usage, 源, composed of 氵 (水 shuǐ) 'water' and 原 yuán 'original,' is used for the meanings 'source,' 'origin,' 'source of a river,' 'fountainhead,' etc. Etymologically, the character is now considered cognate to 原.

Variants of 原 include:

源 原 原 源  
源 源

世 [shì] 世 generation; world;

世 三十 年 爲 一 世 從 卅 而 曳 悉 上 夾 取 異 聲

Three times ten years make a generation, says the Shuo Wen.

Ancient forms of the character include:

世 世 世 世 世 世

And ancient variants include:





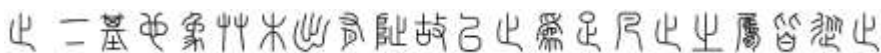
**Note** the similarity of the ideogram 止 [zhǐ] to certain seal and bronze forms ideograms for the character for



feet 止 [zhǐ]. The resemblance in form may be suggestive of a rooted expression. The world emerging, rooted in a higher system; perhaps an initial triadic expression of the same. A traditional explanation says the



foot resembles a growing plant 之 [zhī], as the foot roots the system on the ground – in other words, both are systems that seek rooting on the earth, by their nature.



展 [zhǎn]  Spread Out, Expand,

**Develop, Exhibit.**

    尸  省 聲

The top portion of the character is 尸 [shī], an ideogram interpreted as the body of a person in repose.

尸 陳 也 象 臥 上 形 尸 上 屬 皆 巡 尸

A body stretched out. The character 陳[chén] which the Shuo Wen uses to attribute meaning to 尸 has now the meaning display, lay out, put on display, old, stale, etc.

尸

尸

尸

when it occurs in ideograms show the body of a system, a system restrained to a state, etc.



The form 屍 with 死[sǐ, die, death] added has the meaning, "Corpse, body; sit as representative of the dead at sacrifices;

superintend --- picture of a sitting or lying man," as Karlgren notes. 尸体[shītǐ] means corpse.



The lower portion of character 褻 is a now obsolete character 展



which shows , four  structures, inside a



clothing.





would likely have been a clothing with decorative patterns on it. If we are to take the interpretation of 工 [gong, work] as a carpenter's square, we have instruments laid on a clothing that is stretched out. Work implements 'rolled out.'



The Shuo wen says the 展 is phonetic in 展.

Ideographically, 衣, clothing, seems signific of, amongst other ideas, the outside or surface of a system, the veil of a system, etc.



展[zhǎn] is thus the body of a system stretched out




so as to reveal its contained patterns.

Ancient variants of 展 include:



𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔  
𠂔

邊  **Boundary, border, margin,**

**edge, limit, side, rim, limit.** Composed of the ideogram suggesting movement 辵 and 鼻[biān].

Ancient forms of this ideogram were as:

And variants included:

The portion 鼻  
Shuo Wen:

is explained thus by the



Two covering structures which allows not one to see. As the guarding gatetowers of the imperial palace.

The presentday form of 鼻 is “自 over 穴 over 方,” according to the Wenlin dictionary.



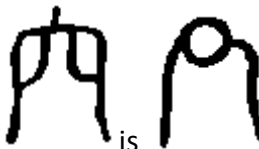
, 自[zì],

is picture of a nose, suggesting as an idea the sense ‘self.’



, 穴[xué], is a ‘cave,’ ‘hole,’ ‘den,’

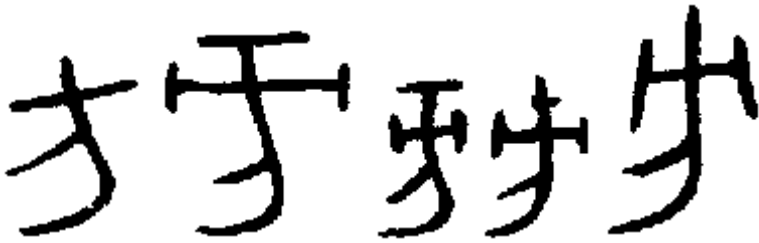
‘acupuncture point,’ etc.



A seal variant of 方 is . 方[fang, side], shows



two boats side by side , or, a boat anchored



perhaps, in certain cases, tied to a pole at the shore, as this



variant suggests .



The seal forms as have in place of



is a double-veil.



appears in forms that predate seal forms, in bronze



forms such as



is thus: The entrance and exit to a system



, the things within which are veiled



to the

self



Or, in forms as

, the entrance and exit to a



system , which, by its nature, connects one system



with another , as perceived by the self.



Some suggest, likely incorrectly, that the form on the upper



portion of may once have been an







Where 彳 was considered a small footstep, and 止 was the imagery of a foot.

彳 止 步 𣥂 象 人 脛 三 屬 相 連 也

止 二 基 也 象 艸 木 出 趾 故 已 止 爲 足 尺 止 止 屬 皆 從 止



In ancient forms 止 appears as



, etc., the imagery of a foot on crossroads. In later



times, it was abstracted to , and eventually interpreted in a different sense, by the Shuo Wen.

任 [rèn] 任

appoint; serve in a position;

appoint to position, trust, term in office, allow, to let one act on his will.

任 係 𠂔 𠂔 人 王 聲

人

The left side is 人 [rén, person, the imagery of a man].

王 王

On the right is 王 [rén] which here derives from the imagery of "a | carrying pole supported — in the middle part and having one object attached at each end, as always done in China," says Karlgren. 王 [rén] represents the Ninth of the ten heavenly stems, and also are attributed the senses great, pregnant, etc.


王 恤 卩 方 屯 舍 極 易 生 故 易 曰 龍 戰 于 野 戰 當 據 屯 象 九 寡 狂 止 形  
 商 斂 王 己 子 生 止 斂 屯 王 貞 巫 同 意 王 貞 辛 象 九 恆 恆 恆 體 屯 凡 王  
 止 屬 皆 從 王



[rèn] is thus a man bearing a responsibility; a person entrusted with a responsibility; etc.



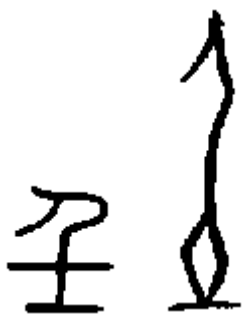
Note that 任 (pronounced tǐng) derives from a different form, the imagery of a person standing on the




ground . In modern writing, 任 [tǐng] is written in the exact same manner as the character for the



Ninth Heavenly Stem, 壬 [rén].



[tǐng] now occurs only as a component in other characters, and not as an independent character.

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王 王 王 王 王

王 王 王 王 王

王 王 王 王 王

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

𠂔 𠂔 [ting] has ancient variants as 𠂔

𠂔 𠂔 , etc.

角刀半

[jiě]

解

辭 𠂔



443

Later, the sword was added, signifying a restrain principle.



. The sense, it seems, is to tackle the problem directly – thus, the sense ‘explain, interpret, dissolve, etc.’

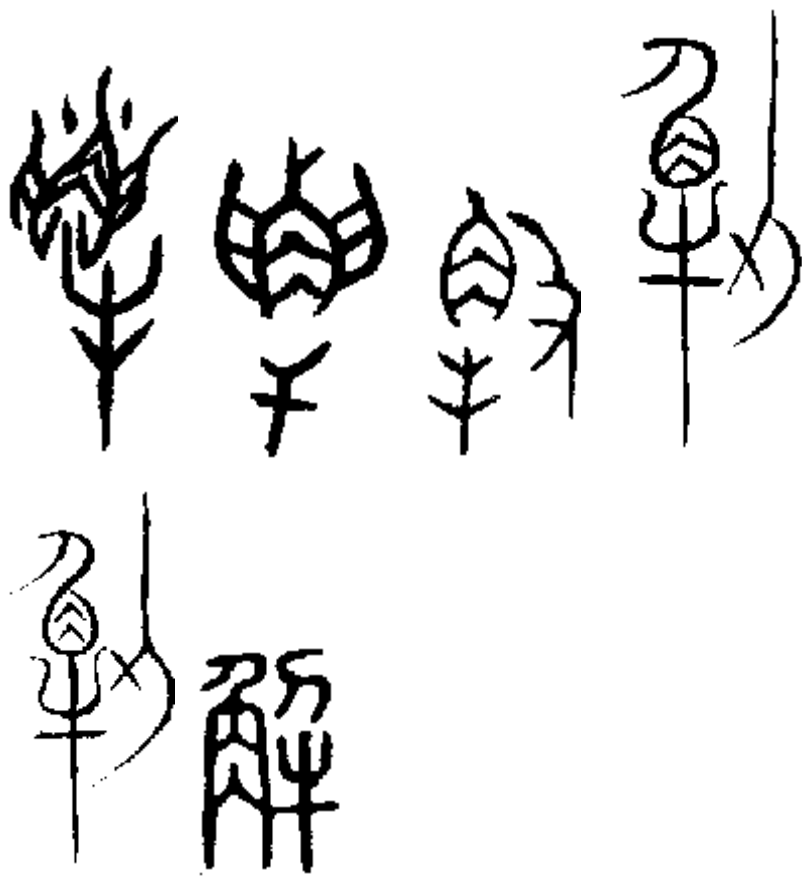
Another sense of the ideogram is dissect, untie, undo, take off, etc. This may have to do with the interpretation of the ideogram as the idea of dissection, removal of the horn from the bull. Or, the sword-like action of the bull horn, which is dissecting in nature.

On yet another angle, we may interpret it as the restrain or separation or dissection[as suggested by the sword] of matter [the bull being the matter-driver, that which helps plough and makes fecund the fields of life], into its individual aspects [as suggest by the horn, that by which animals emphasize their individuality].





Ancient forms include:



Seal forms and variants include:

乃半

𐤀

**Offend, encroach, fight,**

pestle," says Karlgén. "It represents a pestle. Compare 午. By extension, to grind, to destroy; morally, to oppose, to offend against; blunt arms, offence, injury, etc.," says Wieger.

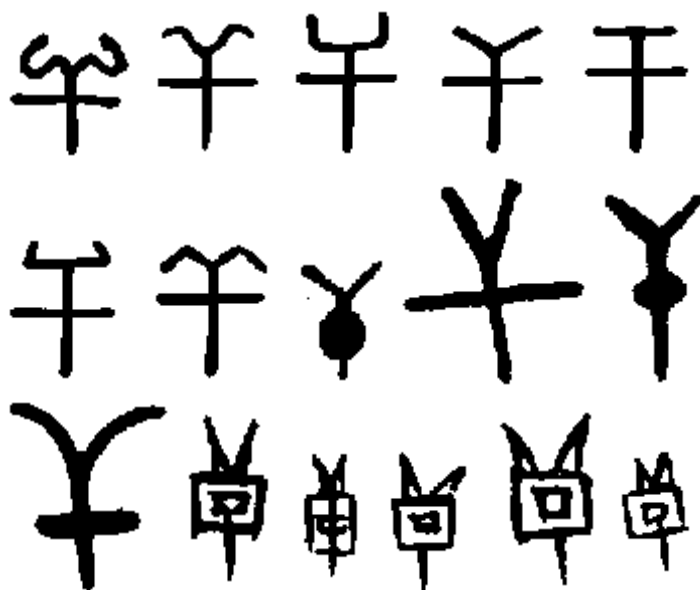
From 一 and 入[rù, enter] inverted, says the Shuo Wen.

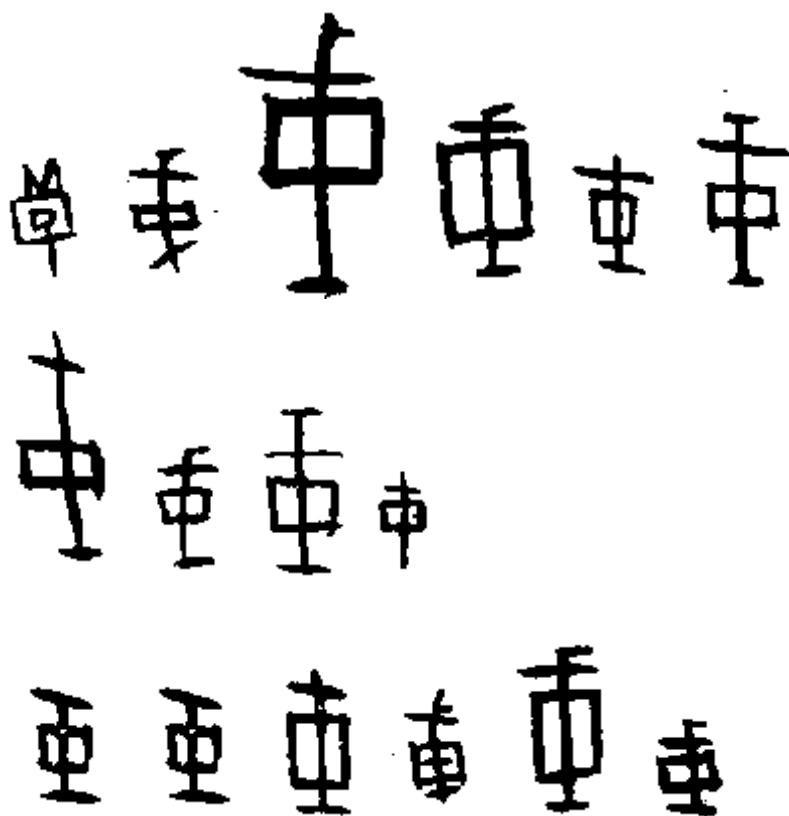
干 初屯 德一 德反 人 尺 干 止 屬 皆 德 干

A related form, composed of 日[rì, sun] and 干[gān], 旱[hàn], is used to signify a dry land, drought, dry spell, etc. “Not raining,” says the Shuo Wen.

旱 不 雨 也 巡 日 干 聲

Ancient forms of 干 include:








幹

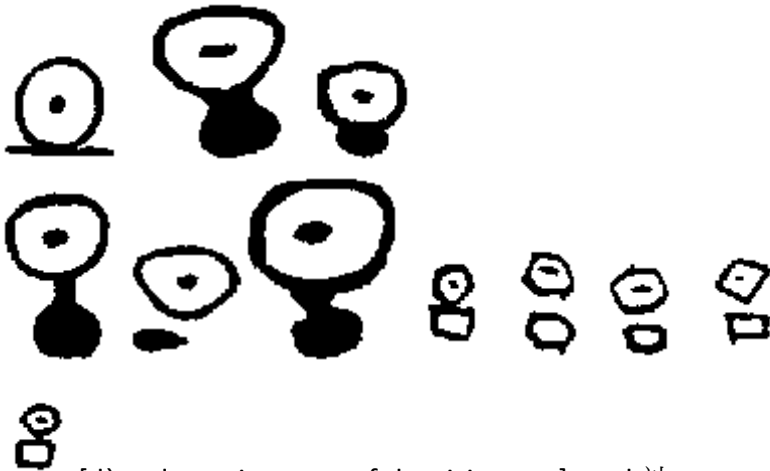
[gàn] **do; trunk (of tree)** "Trunk of a tree; (wood


material, manufacture:) to work, make, do, manage; work, occupation; ability," says Karlgren.

The character is composed of 干[gān] and 𠂔[qián]. From “from 卓 and 人 over 干,” says Wenlin.

The now obsolete character 𠂔 is said by the Shuo Wen to be an ideogram for the splendor of the rising sun. The Shuo Wen

says it is composed of 旦   



 [dàn, dawn, imagery of the rising sun], and 𠂔



[yǎn] which is “flags flying, long bands or ribbons attached to flags, streamers, etc.,” according to the Unihan

database. Another source suggests 旗 are the flying leaves of a flag tangled together.

尊曰婚出矣尊尊也禮旦於聲尺尊上屬皆禮尊

於擒擒上聯於箭上食從中因而坐二於相出人屯講詩懷古入名  
於南子聯月於上屬皆從於

旦 啍 𠂔 𠂔 旦 𠂔 一 二 一 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 旦 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 旦

Karlgren interprets 朝 as the “The 日 sun rising behind the

trees of the 方 jungle."

乾 乾 乾

A related form found in the Shuo Wen is:

豐 關 且 怨 三 日 在 於 中

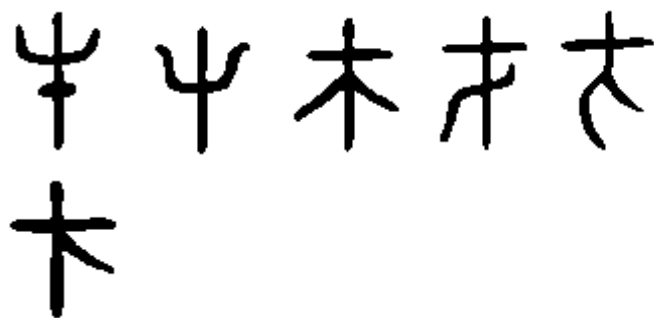
蘇 美 牆 美 木 也 巡 木 彭 聲 一 旦 本 也

才 [cái]

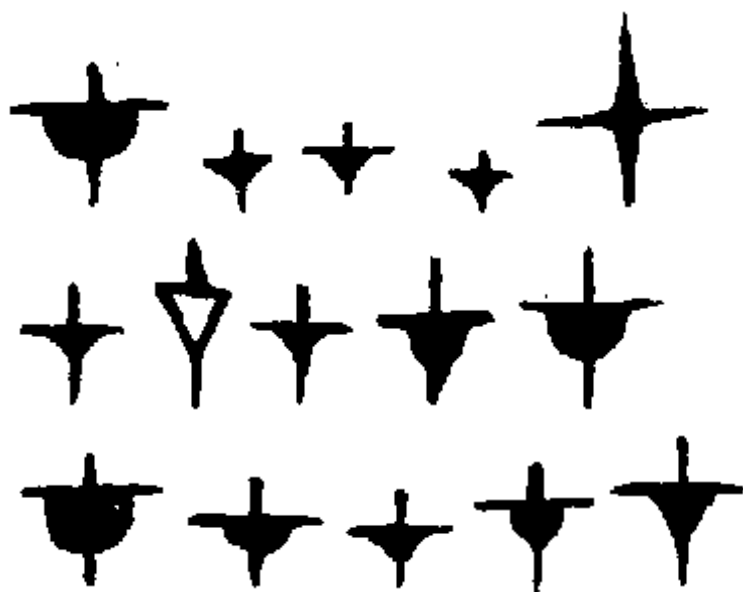
**then.**

牛 牯 木 上 初 英 變 | 二 貫 一 驛 生 於 寶 英 一 地 也 凡 牛 上 屬 皆 變 牛

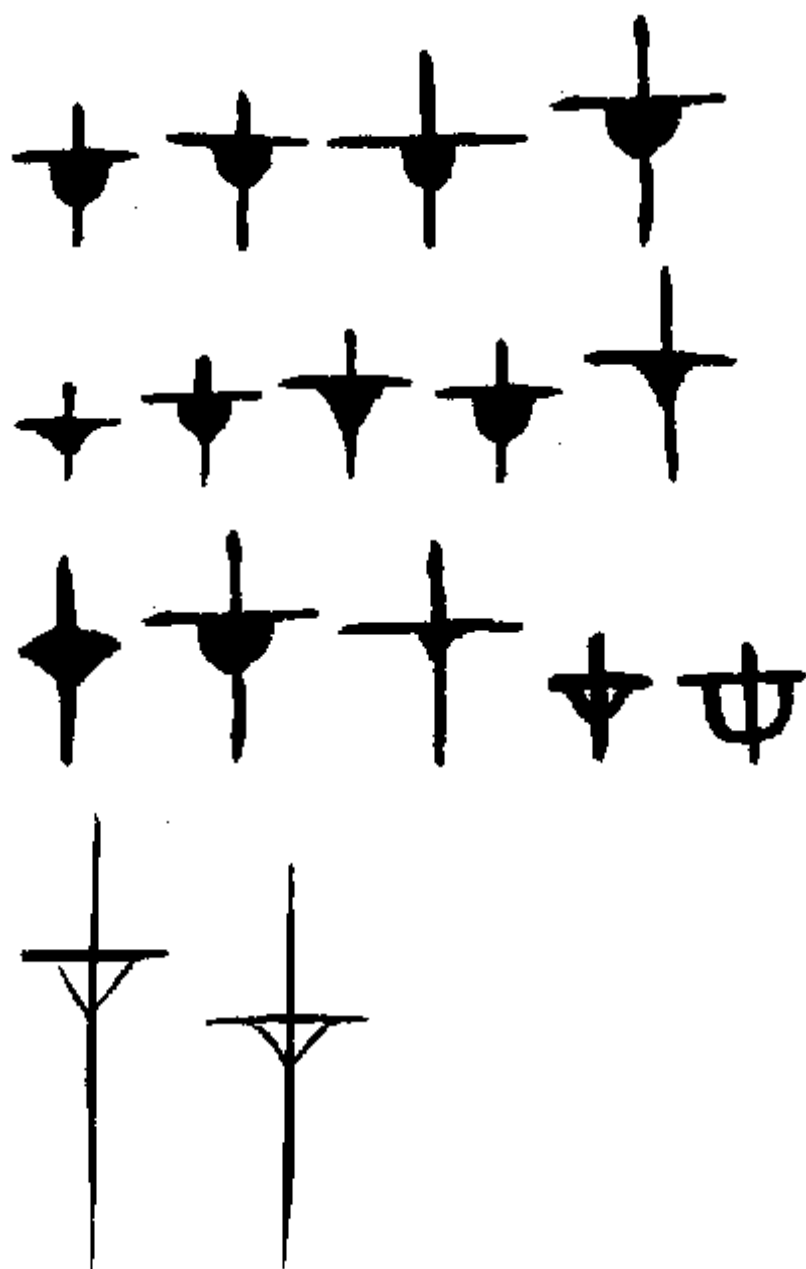
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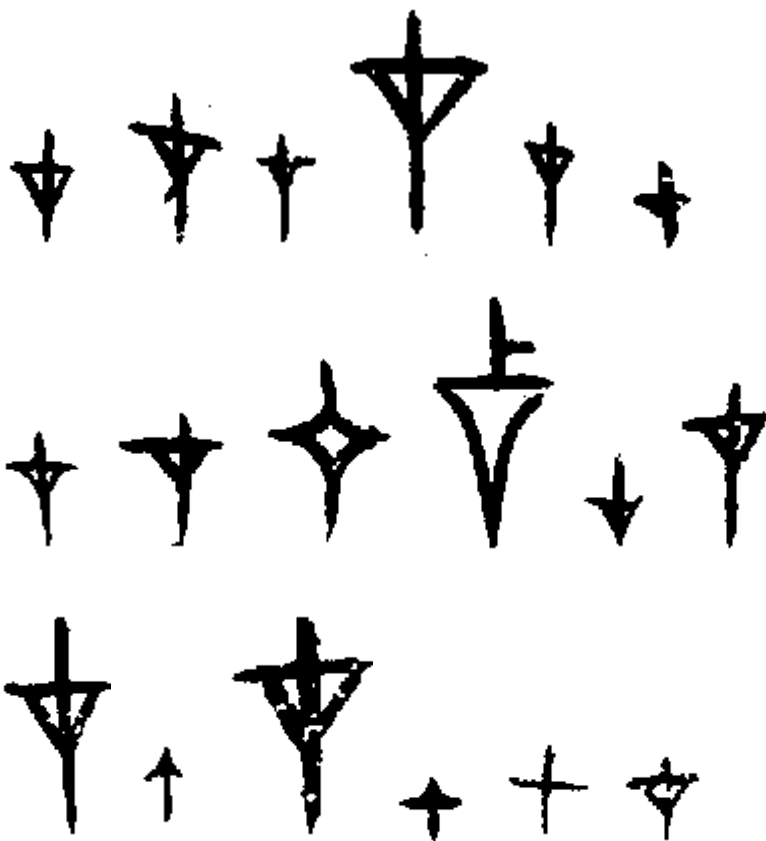


The more ancient forms however seem abstract symbols – a vertical breaking through a surface.

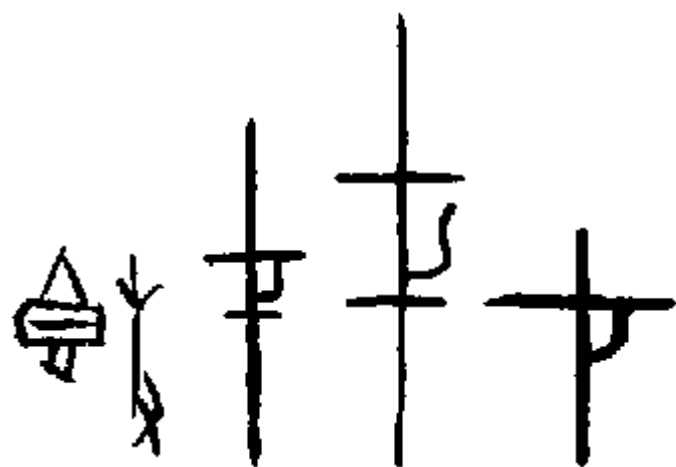


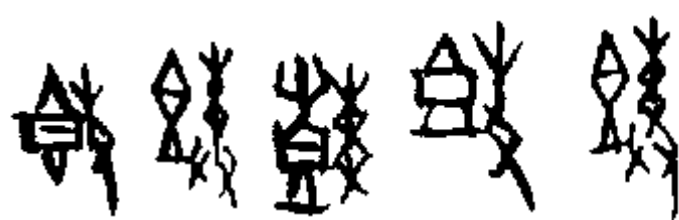


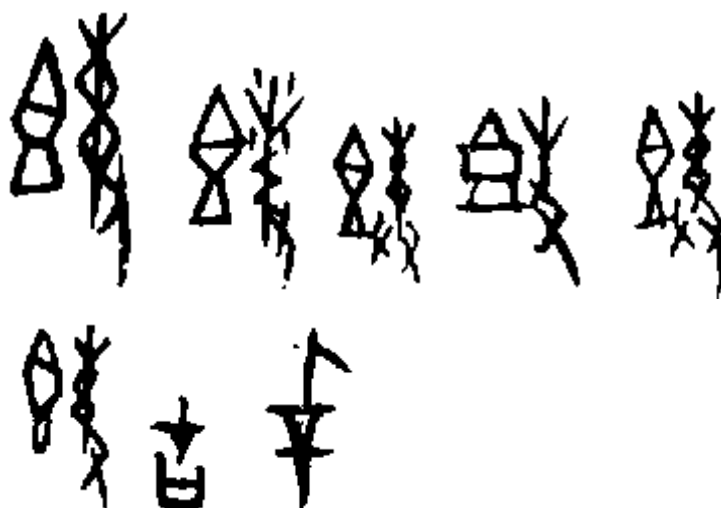




Other ancient variants associated with the ideogram include.  
These could be phallic imagery:







Talent, potential, ability, signified as the ability to make a breakthrough. The sense 'only then' derives from that a principle needs to achieve a breakthrough before a result follows.

資 [zī] 貲 Expenses, money, capital,

supplies, natural endowments, to provide, to supply, to support.

貲 貨 也 從 貝 資 聲

貝 𧇧 𧇨 𧇩 𧇪 𧇫

貝 𧇬 𧇭 𧇮 𧇯

is symbolic of a cowrie.

Cowries were used as money in early China.

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Hence, the money, the goods, the supplies, which is what a man needs when he is in an inferior position or a secondary



position 次

[cì, second inferior,



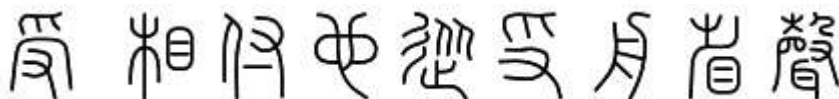
occurrence, sequence]. To supply goods 貝 to the inferior, or to whom there is a need of capital



.次[cì] plays a phonetic role as well, in 資[zī].


[shòu]
Receive, suffer, endure, be

**subject to.**

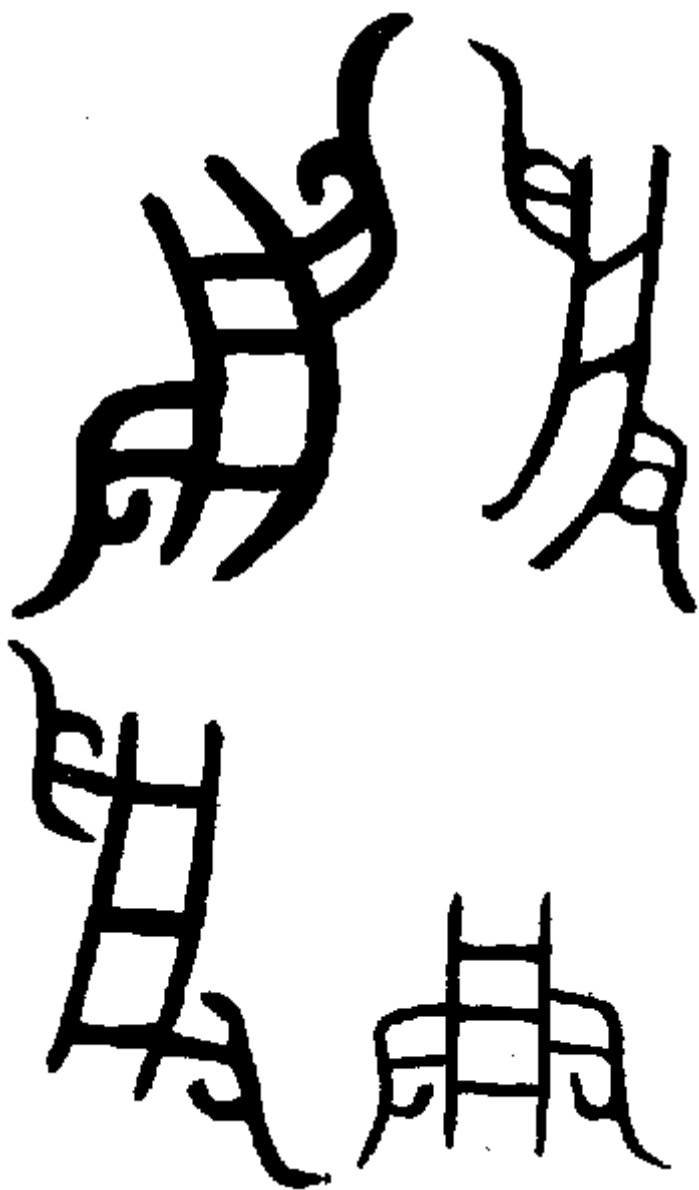


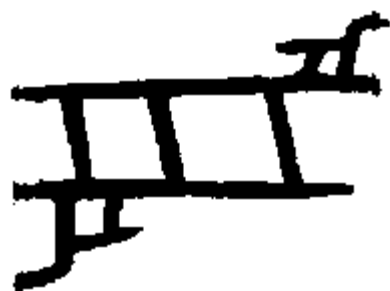
, says the Shuo Wen.

A hand giving, and another taking. Likely the upper hand being the one that gives. The central portion is from the image of a boat abstracted, according to the Shuo Wen. The boat is something used to transport goods.

Another source claims the central portion was, in ancient times, a tray.









**Note:** The two hands suggest a thing falling, says the Shuo Wen:

受 持 荷 屯 二 二 相 付 屯 從 爪 又 尺 受 止 屬 留 從 受 讀 苛 讀 懷 貳 持

Also, note the Shuo Wen's explanation of:

付 𠂇 屯 從 又 持 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇

The notion of that which is given 'falling' from a higher place – the giver being placed higher.

界 [jiè]

a field 田, with the imagery of a man 人, and the ideogram for eight 八, which signifies the idea of division.

界 竟 也 巡 田 介 聲

允成

The ideogram 介 [jiè, introduce] 𠂇 had in ancient times the meaning to divide, to mark the boundaries of a field, etc.

尔 畫 也 怨 入 怨 八

畫 亦 也 從 肅 象 田 四 亦 肅 所 已 畫 上 尺 畫 上 屬 皆 從 畫

"Boundary; separate, lie between; (the barrier, the protecting cover of the body:) scales, mail, armour; protect, help, assistant, waiter; introduce; strong; important -- the

boundaries that 人 separate 人 people," says Karlgren listing the various senses of 介.

親 [qīn] 親 kin; kiss; relative; personal;

**intimate; close; love very much; be very fond of.**

The ancient forms show a person with a big eye, observing a man in descension, a man aligned upside-down to the



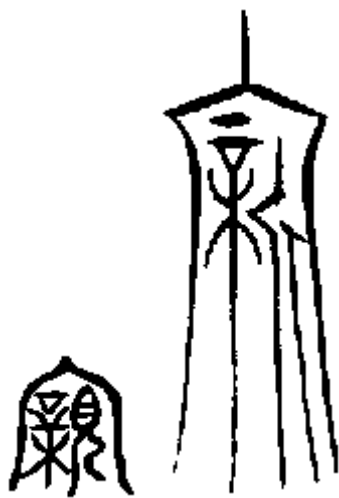
hierarchies, and thus a man in suffering.

. A person who takes care of another in suffering, thus, an intimate relation . Now the character has 亲 on the left hand side, “亲 qīn originally meant 'hazel-nut tree', composed of 辛 [xīn, suffering] phonetic and 木 (mù) 'tree', combined so that 亲 is written 立 over 木,” notes Wenlin.

The tree here might suggest *patterns* of descension, or things part of the same system, that is in a formative descension

through the cosmic hierarchies. “Mnemonic: Family tree,” says Wenlin. In some traditional myths the tree is analogous to a central world axis, in others the Cosmos is likened to an upside down tree; the tree may also symbolize relationships between parts of the same system; varied concepts are seen associated with the tree, in traditions.

In some variants are seen a roof added. The roof can symbolically suggest, amongst other ideas, the ‘vault’ of the Cosmos.



Ancient forms include:



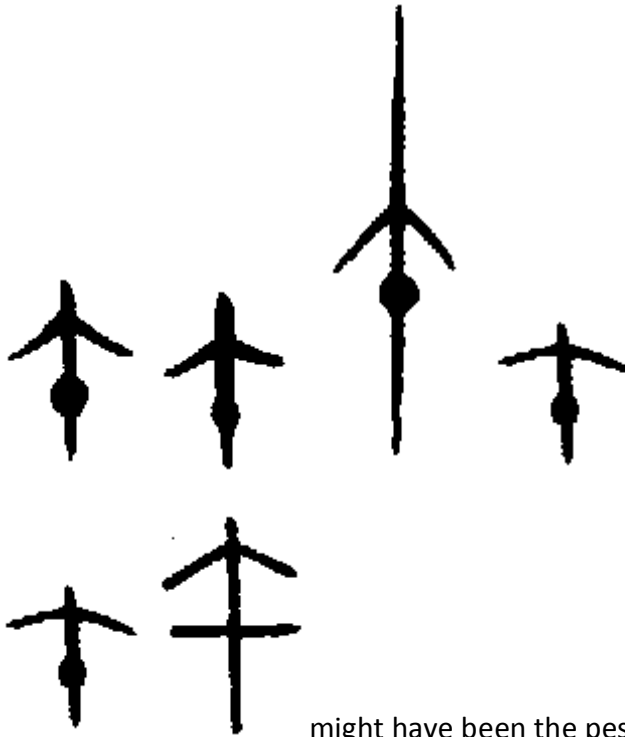
許 [xǔ]

**allow, permit.** Words 言 which

give one the permission to forge ahead 午. 午 which the  
 "Picture of a battering ram or pestle, cf. 干, " according to

Karlgren. Ancient forms suggest 午[wǔ]





might have been the pestle; while 干



a battering ram made of tree trunk, with a metal ram head. Both the battering ram and the pestle are used for breaking down hindrances.

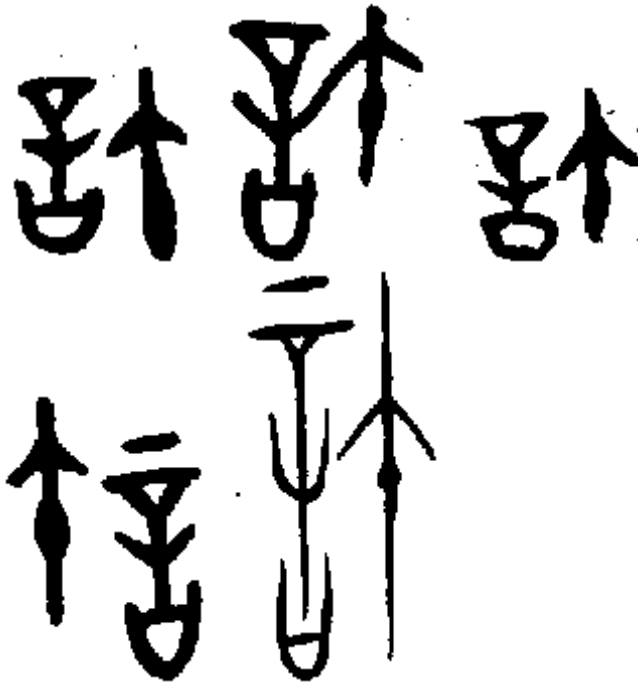
The Earthly Branches divide the day into twelve parts, of two hours each. The seventh double-hour is between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.. 中午 zhōngwǔ means noon, 上午 is the morning;



下午 is the afternoon, 午饭 is lunch, etc. 午 thus signifies a central point in activity, when activity is vigorous.

午 wǔ is also the seventh year, the year of the horse 馬, in the 12 year Chinese zodiac.

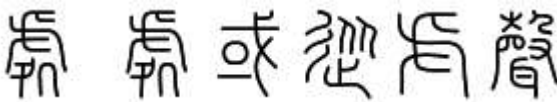
Ancient forms of 許 include:



And their variants include:



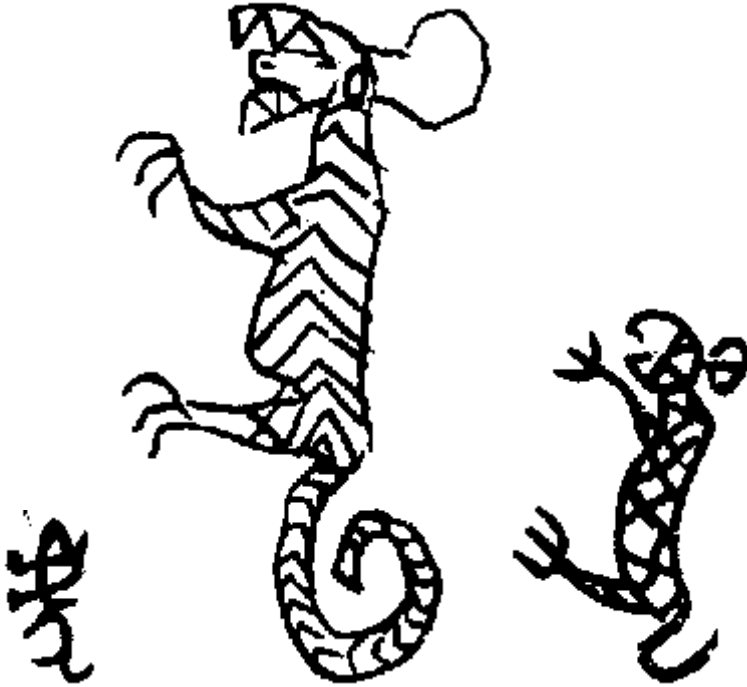
處 [chù] 處 [chǔ] place [chǔ] deal with.



"Where you 久 go and 几 sit down," says Karlgren. From 久(zhǐ, 'walk slowly') and 几(jī, 'small table'). "Somebody put 虍(虎 hǔ) 'tiger' on top of it all for no known reason, making the full form 處," says Wenlin. The tiger was added possibly because it is a territorial animal. The ideogram may also be interpreted as the territory where its owner 虎 paces around 久 and sits 几.

虎

The ideogram for tiger 虎[hǔ] was written as



etc. The sense 'deal with' may derive from a similar idea expression as is contained in the English phrase 'to put things in their place.'

虎 三 獸 上 君 從 虎 從 人 足 象 人 足 也

𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

隊

[duì]

team; a row of people; group;

**a contingent in army.**

隊 巡 高 隊 𠂔 巡 𠂔 豕 聲

On the left is character which abstracts the image of a

terraced mount

𠂔 大 陸 𠂔 山 𠂔 𠂔 豕 象 形

A mountain-like structure without rocks, to interpret the surface sense of the Shuo Wen explanation. Now abstracted

to 阜 fù, and interpreted as a 'hill.' As part of a character, it is written, further abstracted, as 阝. Here, in this character, it contributes to the sense – an ordered structure, a hierarchically ordered structure, etc.

In usage, the character 阜 [fù] also conveys the sense 'abundant.' A well cultivated terrace.

On the right side is



Composed of 豕



, a pictographic representation of a swine or a hog, and 八[bā, eight] which indicates division. Shuo Wen says

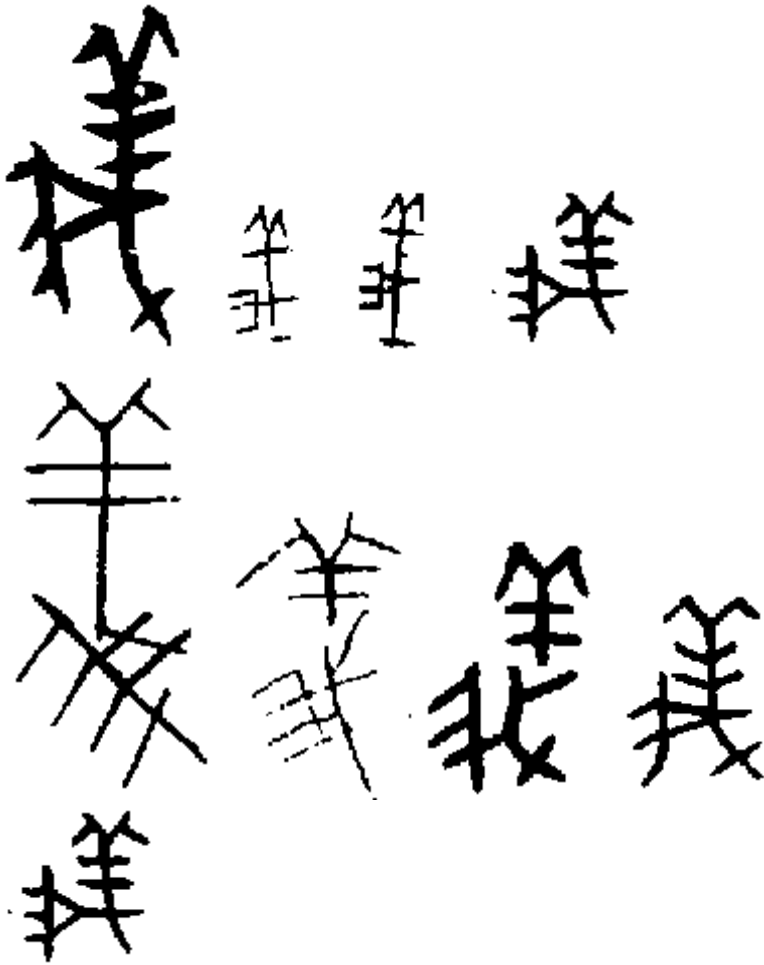


has a sense similar to one-following-another. 豕 Pigs were domesticated in China. A rank 八 of domesticated animals 豕 moving, one following the other.

**Ancient forms and variants include:**

**Note:** When 隹 occurs in a character, if on the left-side it is as abstraction from 隹 [fù] ('hill' 阜), and when on the right side, it is from 邑 [yì] (邑 'city' 邑).

義  Justice; righteousness.

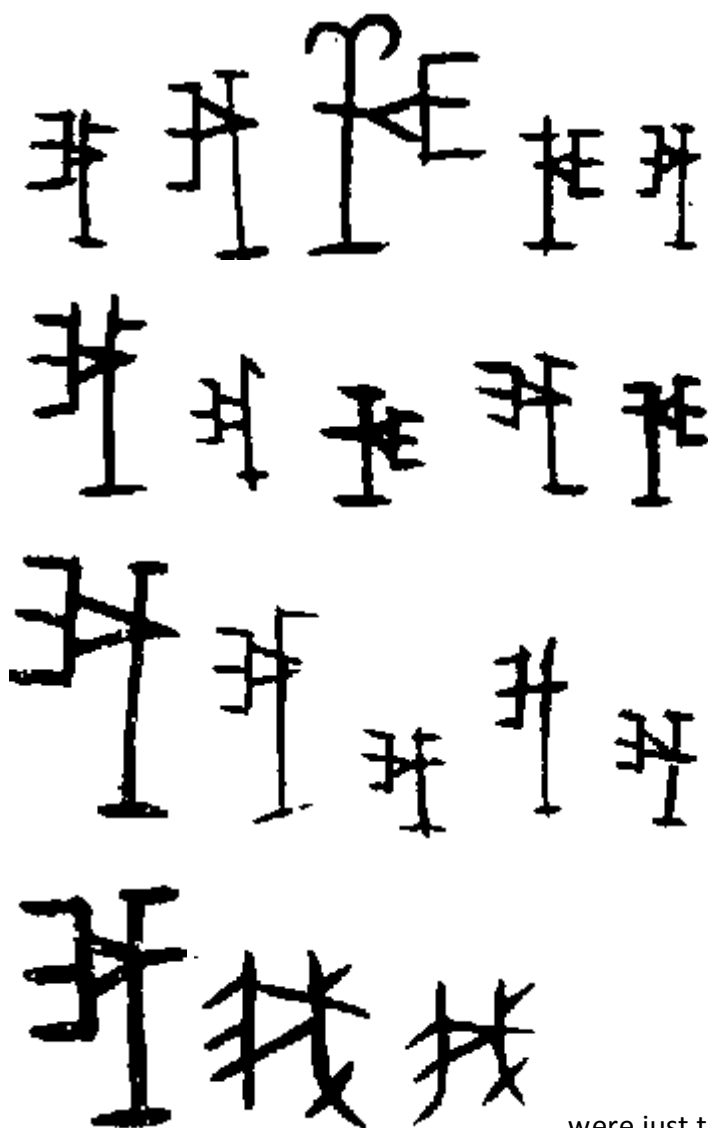


From 𦍋[羊 yáng, 'sheep'] over 我 [wǒ, I].



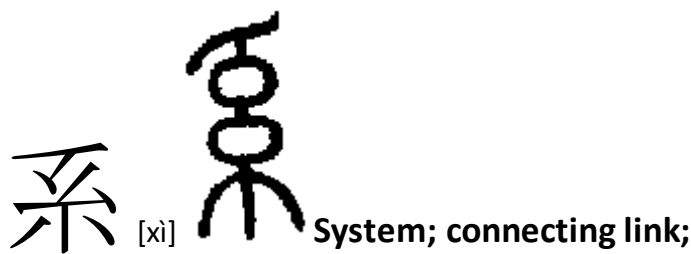
The ideogram 我 [wǒ, I], in its most ancient forms ,



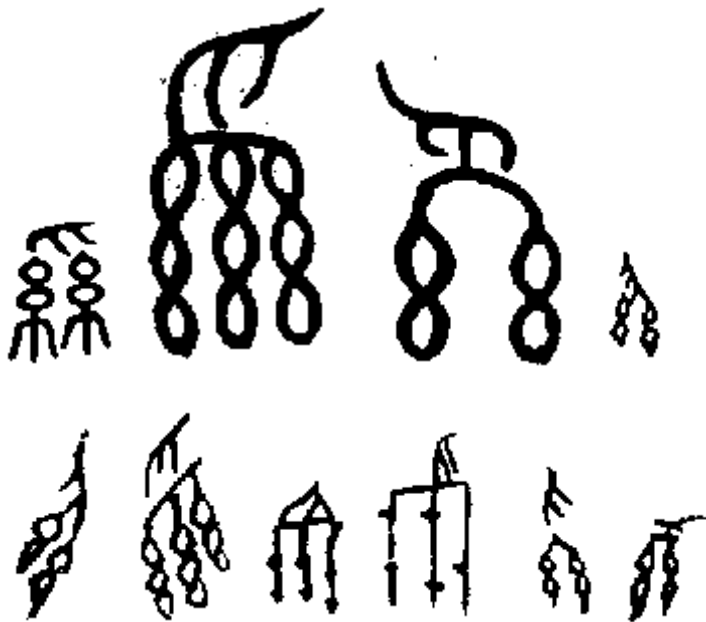


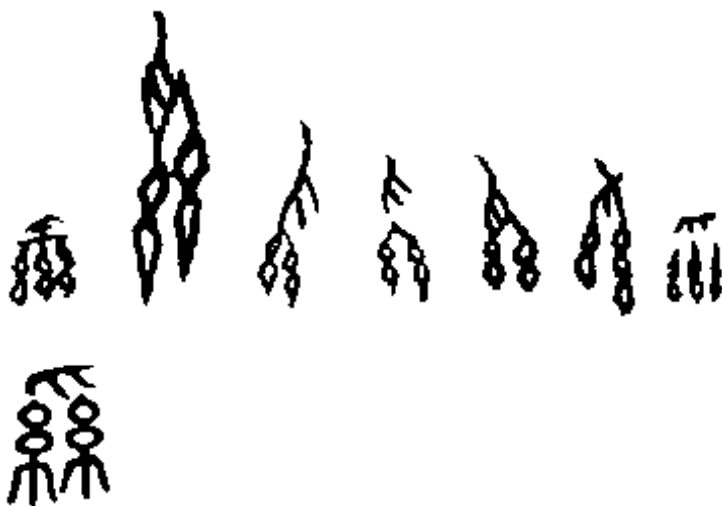
, were just the picture of a particular kind weapon. Weapons are that by which the self protects itself, protects its interest, that by which the self emphasizes itself, etc. The sheep symbolizes

goodness. Goodness protected, goodness allowed to emphasize itself, etc.



**department; series; family.** "The original character had 爪 hand above, now badly contracted, and 糸 silk thread," says Karlgren.





A hand controlling a connected system. A system is characterized by the presence of connected parts.

**Notes:**



is the image of a fine thread. The origin of this ideogram might be the imagery of cocoons which get interconnected by their threads during their processing.



Shuo Wen interprets the top portion of as , a character to which it attributes the sense to stretch out, to make apparent or lucid, etc.

厂

[厂, yì] is, as a component, now given the name 盾字頭,

盾

in other words, the top portion of the character 盾

盾

(dùn, shield).

原 縣 屯 巡 糸 厂 聲 尺 原 止 屬 皆 巡 原  
 糸 細 絲 屯 象 束 絲 止 形 尺 糸 止 屬 皆 巡 糸 讀 苛 縣  
 厂 拽 屯 囑 屯 象 拽 引 止 形 尺 厂 止 屬 皆 巡 厂 履 亭 巡 卹

A closely related form, 係[xi, relate to; bear on], has 亻[人, rén, person] added on the left side.

𠂔 𠂔 束 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

𠂔 is an abstraction of ideogram for person, 人, and is referred to as the 單人旁 [dānrénpáng], or the ‘single man’s side.’

The character 繫[jì, xì] has the meanings tie, fasten, do , button up. The top portion of this character is 𠂔 [jī]

𠂔

, which is both phonetic and signific. The beatings

𠂔

of a chariot’s axle, is the ideographic sense of

𠂔

And 𠂔 applied to the idea of a string forming connections - gives the meanings fasten, tie, do, etc. -



abstracting the nature of movement of the hand



involved in the actions. 𨔵 [wèi] is said to be the shaft of a carriage. "Shaft of a carriage -- end of shaft marked

by a circle (here a square); to be distinguished from 車," says Karlgren.

𨔵 車 軸 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵

𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵 𨔵

"Originally 𨔵, from 𨔵 and 𨔵 (shū) 'beat'. The meaning was, to jostle or bump, 𨔵 representing the end of a 車 (chē) war chariot's axle. 𨔵 became 𨔵 by the omission of one stroke. Then a 手 (shǒu) hand was added, forming 擊," says Wenlin, in explaining the character 擊[jī, beat, strike, hit knock].

擊 支 也 從 手 擊 聲

北

[běi] **north**; Two people facing the opposite

directions, with their backs against each other. The Chinese maps and compasses took South for the top direction, as opposed to North in Western traditions. The traditional Chinese word-phrase for a compass is 指南針[zhǐnánzhēn], or, South pointing needle.

𠂔 𠂔 也 從 二 人 相 背 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔 𠂔

"The opposite of 从 cóng. Not to follow each other, to turn one's back," says Wieger. North was traditionally considered the 'back side.'

請

[qǐng]

請

**Please; invite; request.**

請 謁 也 怨 音 青 聲

音

Kind words, or polite words. From 言 [yán] words,

青

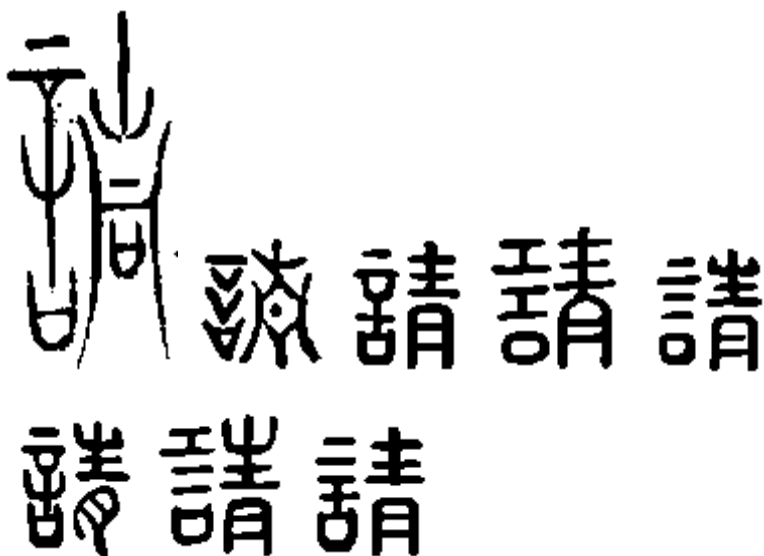
expressed intent, and 青 [qīng] green, blue, nature's

青

colour, young, etc. 青 may ideographically be thought of as a freshly produced life. Hence the ideogram suggests tender 青 words 言.

**Ancient variants include:**





請 請 請 請



**Note:** Interpretations for were presented earlier. Yet another interpretation of the ideogram comes from Lindqvist, "Picture of a flute with a mouth blowing into it."

安 [ān] 𡩺 𡩻 𡩼 𡩽



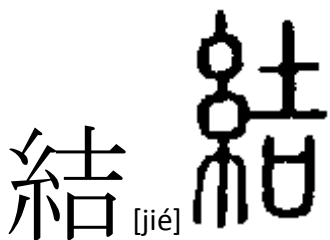
Still, quiet;

peaceful; rest content.

The ideogram is composed of the imagery of a 宀 (mián, roof) over 女 (nǚ, woman). A good woman under a roof – peaceful. Passive alignment with the world-axis, the woman in the ideogram being centrally located underneath the roof, as

suggested by these seal variants

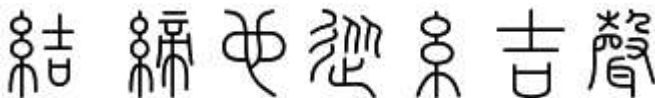




[jié]

tie; knit; knot; weave; join

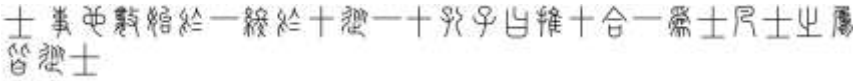
**together** [jiē] **bear fruit [verb.], firm, strong.**



Shuo Wen uses the word 締 to explain the ideogram. 締 has now the meanings connect; bring together; establish; etc.

From 糸(sī, thread) and 吉(jí, good luck). 吉 is the "口 speech of a 士 sage, bringing luck; good, auspicious, happy," says Wieger. "An 士 affair ...which may be 口 spoken of, not taboo," says Karlgren. Here Karlgren apparently draws from the Shuo Wen explanation of 士[shì, scholar] in which the

ideogram is attributed the meaning 事[shì, thing, event, affair].



Shuo Wen also concurs that the ideogram 士 [shì] comes from the ideograms for 十 ten and 一 one, combined together. The number principles were thought to abstract all manifested phenomenon, the sage or the scholar is someone aware of the fundamental principles of things.

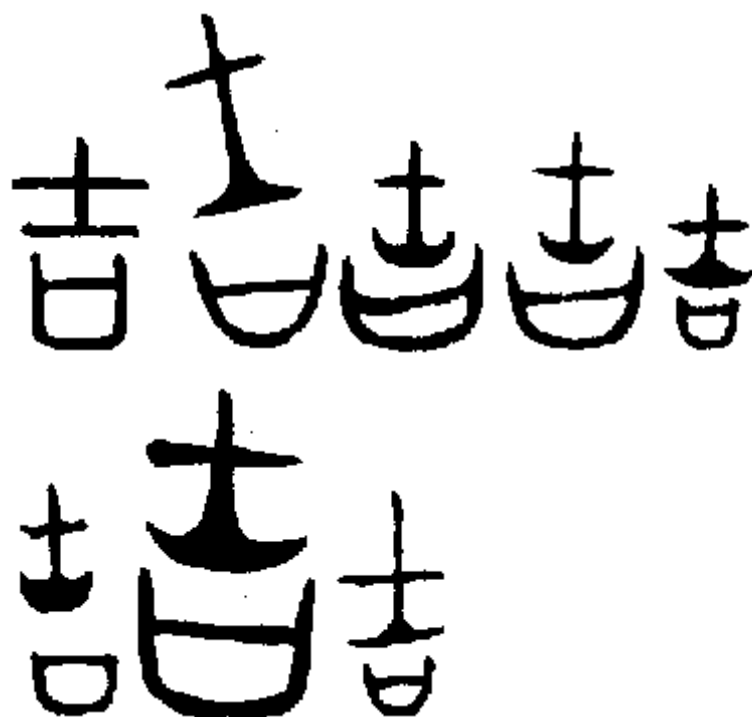
The words of a scholar 吉 is auspicious and also connects things 糸 together in perception, that is, it endows understanding. From this can derive the sense *tie, join together, bear fruit, strong, etc.*

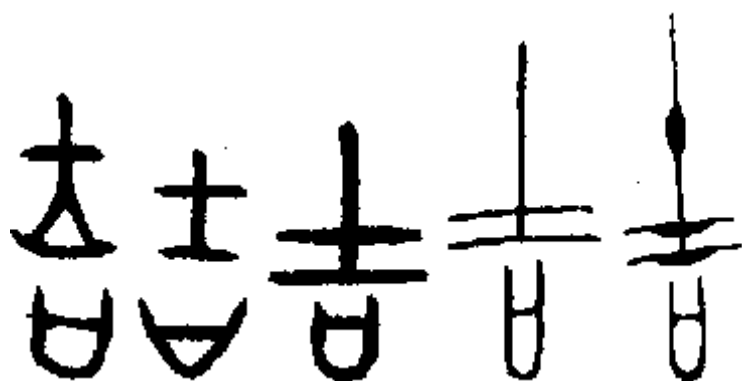
Variants of the character include:

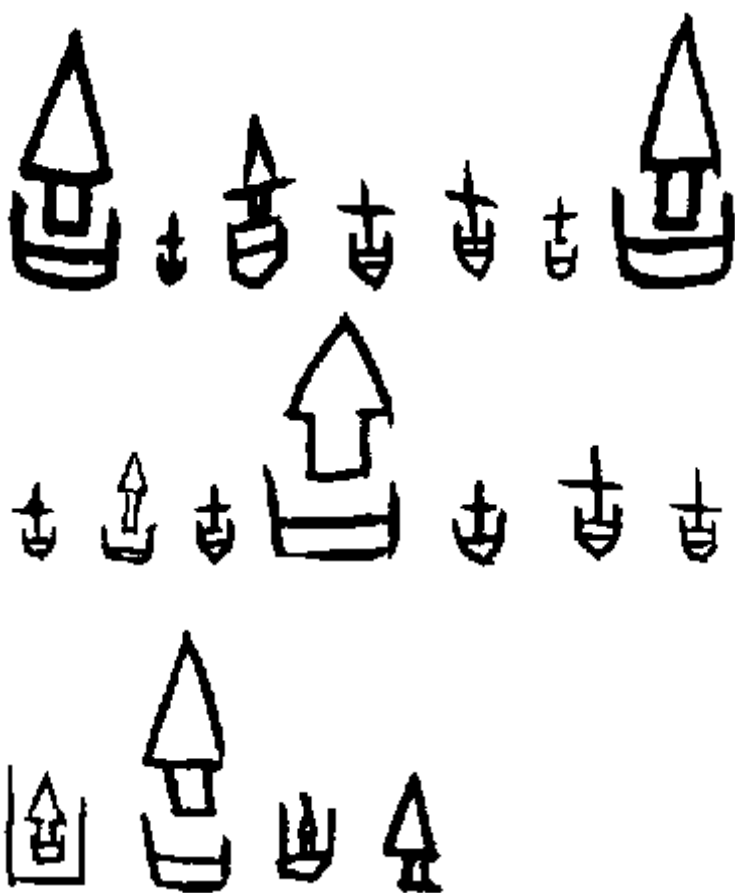


**Notes:** Distinguish 士[shì, scholar] from 土[tǔ, earth], the lower line being short in the former. Both the ideograms have been interpreted by certain scholars as phallic symbols, in their origin.

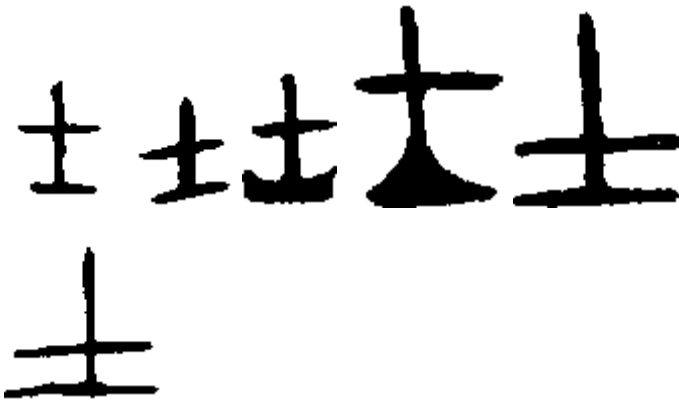
Ancient forms of 吉 [jí, good luck] include:



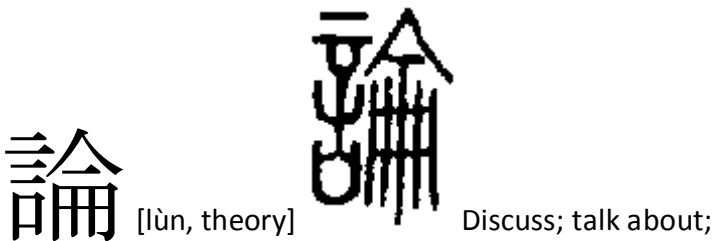




Ancient forms of 士[shì, scholar] include:




In the Japanese language a phrase for the “Way of the Warrior” is 武士道, and the phrase is pronounced Bushidō in Japanese



discourse.

On the left is 言 [yán, words] and on the right is the ideogram 侖 [lún, logical consequence, order, coherence]

which depicts the sense to “ (= 集) collect



册documents," says Karlgren. Thus, words 言 which express ordered ideas 論.

册[cè] [cóng] is an alternate form of 冊, interpreted as book, booklet, documents, etc. "Writing tablet; a list, document, records; diploma -- picture of wooden writing slips tied together," says Karlgren..

### Notes:

The Shuo Wen explanation of the character 論, and its components, along with their ancient forms, are given below.

論 議 也 從 言 論 聲

論

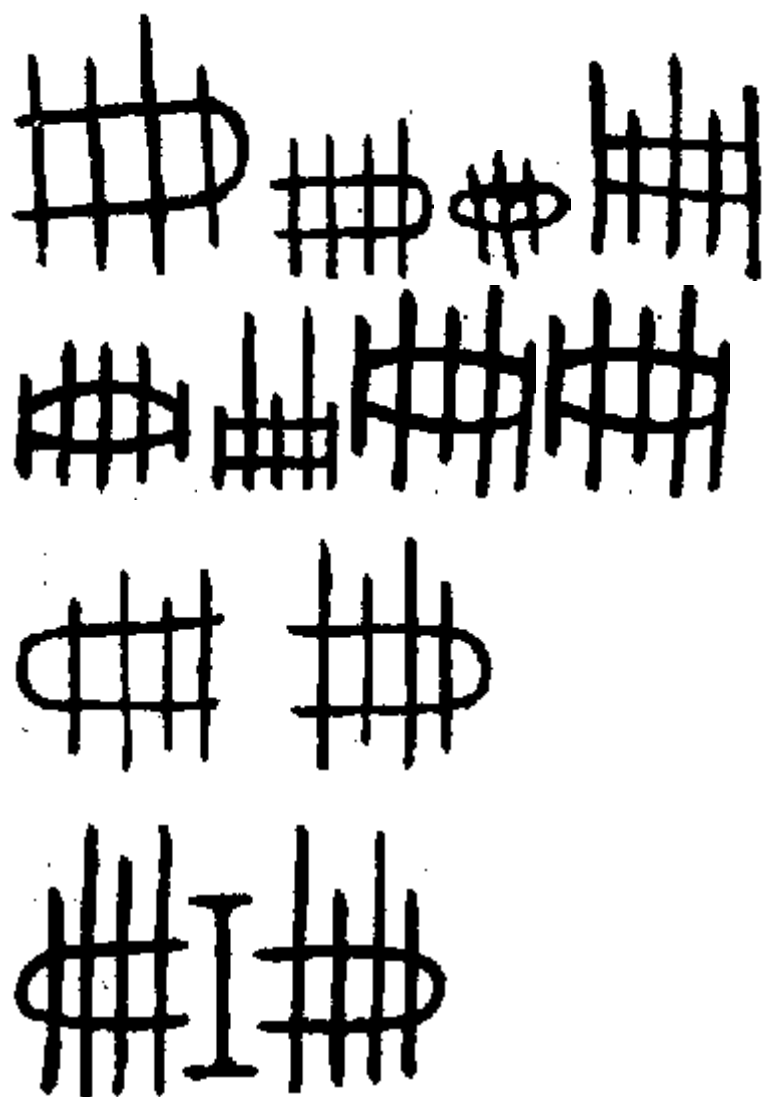
論 也 從 言 論 聲



△ 三合也 𠂔 人 一 象 三 合 止 形



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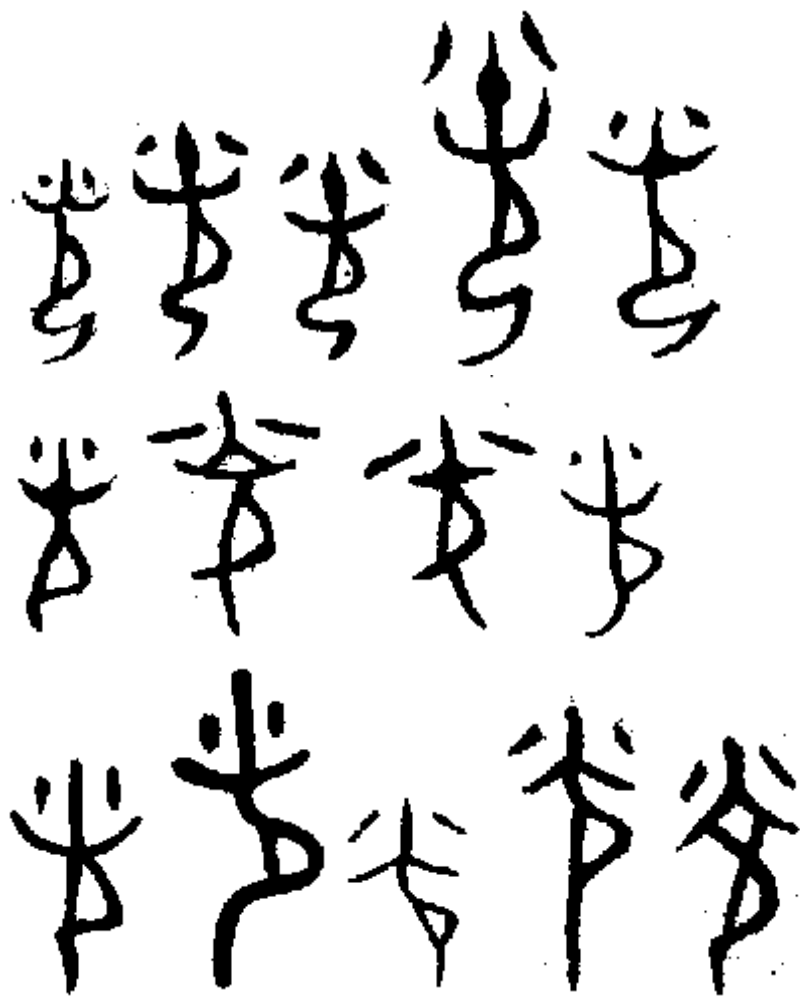


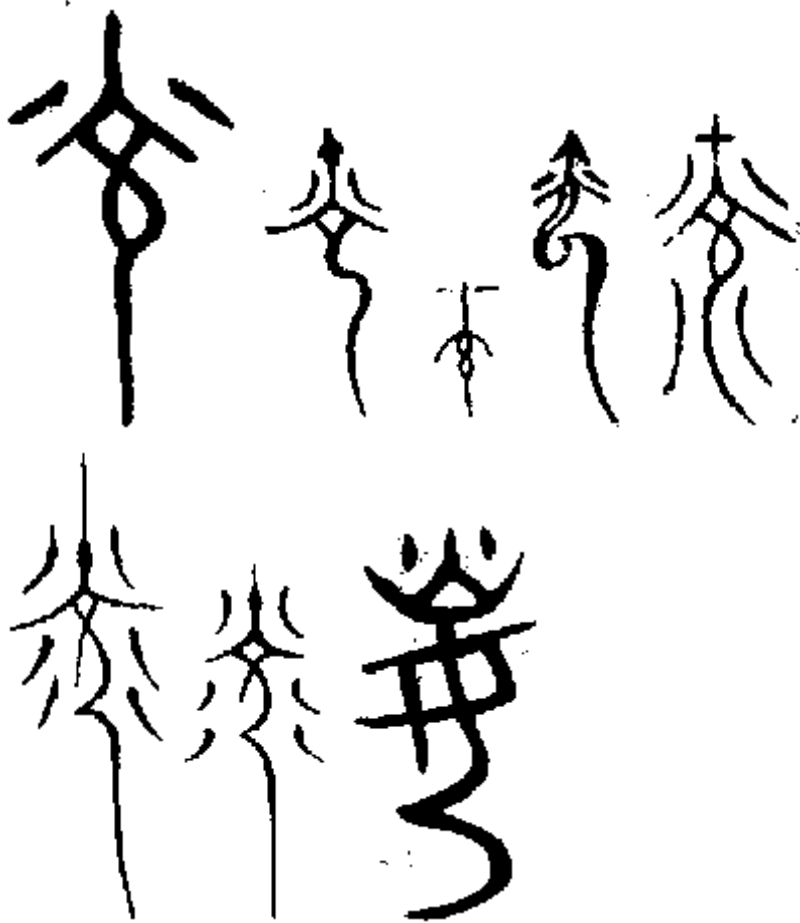






Other ancient forms of the character include:





And Seal variants of the character include:



灾 灾 灾 灾 灾  
灾 灾 灾 灾 灾  
灾 灾 灾

Note that the character for fire 火 appears in ancient writing as:

火 火 火 火 火  
火 火 火 火 火

, etc.; with variants such as

[zhǐ]

a finger; to direct; point;

The hand pointing, from 手 [shǒu, hand] and 旨 [zhǐ, intention] playing a phonetic role, says the Shuo Wen. An action that expresses an intent – to point to something, to the object of the manifest will. The fingers of the hand are that by which expressed intent is made accurately manifest into reality. The action 手 associated with intention 旨 – to direct.

Seal variants include:

拮 拈 拊 拑 拒

### Notes:

𠂔 is described such by the Shuo Wen.

𠂇 美也 𠂇 日 一 聲 尺 𠂇 上 屬 皆 𠂇

And its component,  $\bigcirc$  is explained such.

日 美 也 迎 日 舍 一 一 趨 也 尺 日 上 屬 皆 迎 日

Both the characters being attributed the sense 美 [měi]  
'beautiful.'

is a beautiful perception, or a harmoniously expressed intent, in its ancient sense.



a turning man indicates change or transformation.

Transformation following expressed intent, or transformation



of man following a perception.




Thus, manifested harmonious intention, or the manifested effect of the beautiful' perception. 旨 has also the meanings 'will, an imperial decree, good, tasty, beautiful, etc.' "Good-tasting, good, nice, excellent; aspire to, purport, wish, will; emperor's will, imperial decree -- the seal has 匕 spoon and 甘 sweet, the latter now corrupted," says Karlgren.

Variants of 旨 include:

今 [jīn] now, this;

今 是 時 也 從 厶 匕 匕 古 夬 及

The manifest moment in time. here, in the context, may be thought of as the moment in which the past, present, and future merge, ideographically represented. The

ideographic form in the lower portion of the character, , is interpreted by the Shuo Wen to be an ancient form of 及[jí, reach, as well as]

及 逮 也 從 又 入

𠂇 古 夊 及 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 及 如 𠂇

𠂇

is an ancient form of 及, and in the 秦刻石 [Qínkèshí], 及 is written such, says the Shuo Wen. The 秦刻石 are seven inscribed steles recording the deeds of the Qin Emperor, who is sometimes called the First Emperor of China. Under his military campaigns was China first unified. The Qin Emperor's rule was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C.

Ancient forms of 今 include:

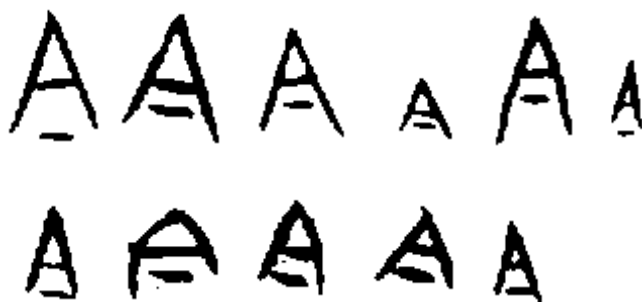
今 AAAA

AA

AA


AAAAA


AAAAA




Variants include:



The most ancient forms of the character, , seem to suggest the moment — [a line, ideographically conveying the

sense 'unity'] where things manifest  in coherent perception, or, where the past, present, and the future,

 merge as one — , the moment, in perception.



such as  etc., the ancient forms

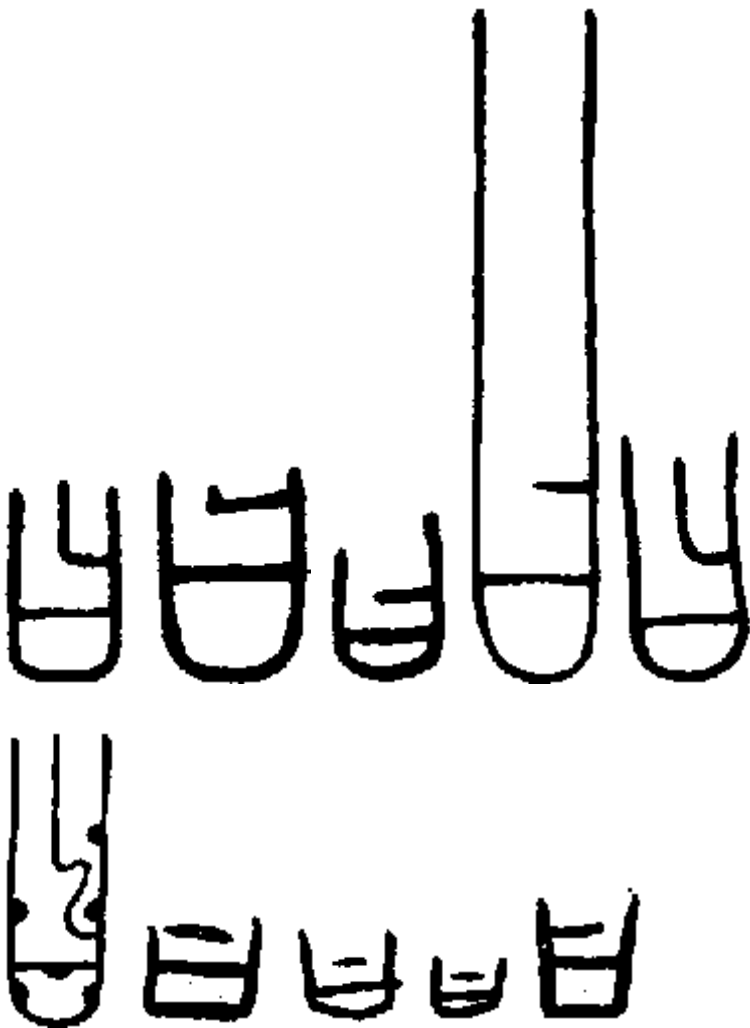
۱۵۶۳

A




山 畧 也 德 甘 象 甘 气 出 也 尺 白 土 屬 皆 德 白


Ancient forms of 𠄎 include:




And variants include:



This allows us to hypothesize that forms such as  and

 may have suggested to the ancients an emergence from a higher ordering, the moment as it manifests downward from the dome of Heavens, etc. And seal variants

for the form, such as , lend credence to our theory.

走 [zǒu]

走 趨 屯 趨 大 止 大 耆 屬 屯 尺 走 止 屬 皆 趨 走

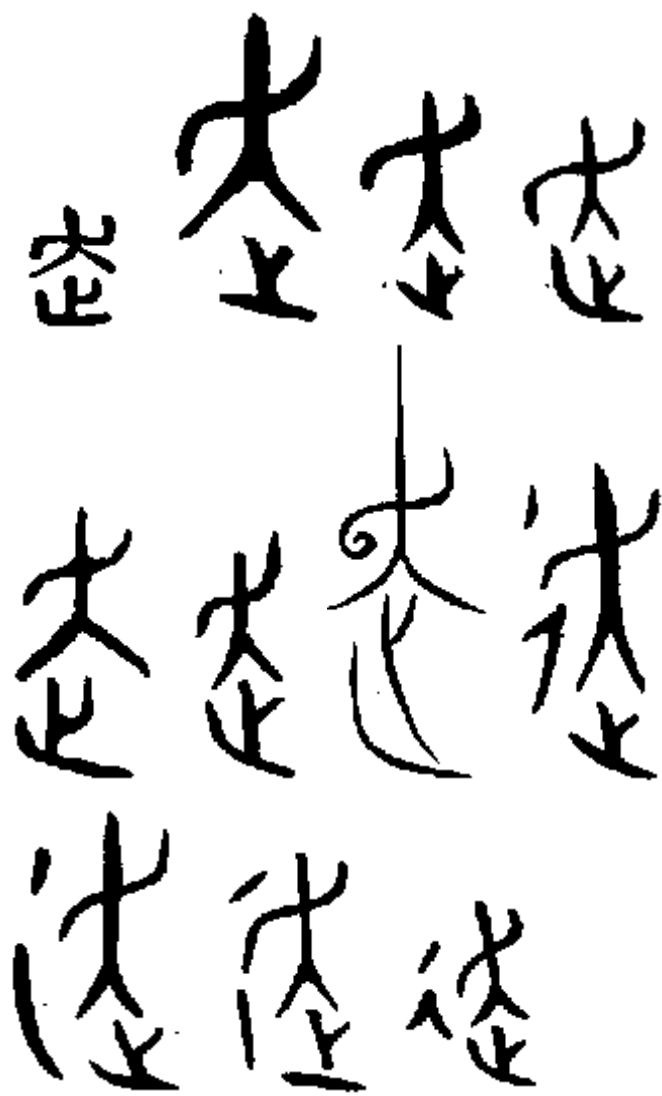
天

夭[yāo]

大 屬也 巡 大 象 形 尺 大 止 屬 皆 巡 大

"Bent, delicate, tender; young, fresh, beautiful -- man with head bent down; the word is cognate to (𠂔 and 幼); sometimes used for (疾)," says Karlgren explaining 夭.

Ancient forms include:



And variants include:

伏虎

[mù]

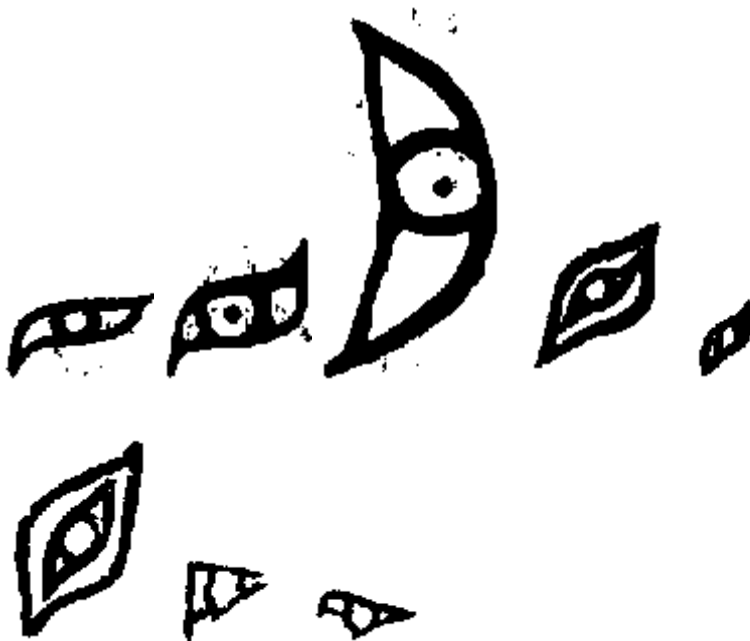


## Eye. The pictographic

representation of a human eye. The eye is turned sideways in the present form.

目 人 眼 𠂔 象 形 童 童 子 𠂔 尺 目 上 屬 皆 從 目

Ancient forms include:



And variants include:







𣶒 𣶒 𣶒 𣶒 𣶒 𣶒 𣶒



**Note:**

The characters and 𣶒 𣶒 [probable ancient pronunciation /kuin?/], 𣶒 𣶒 [ancient pronunciation kwad, kwai, kwei, according to Karlgren who attributes the meaning “watering channel, drain,” to the ideogram], 𣶒 𣶒 [chuān, river,] all were ideograms that represented streams of water, river bodies, irrigation channels, etc.

$\rangle$  and  $\rangle\rangle$ 

ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄏ ㄒ ㄓ ㄔ ㄕ ㄖ ㄗ ㄘ ㄙ ㄨ ㄣ ㄤ ㄥ ㄨ ㄣ ㄤ ㄥ  
 ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄏ ㄒ ㄓ ㄔ ㄕ ㄖ ㄗ ㄘ ㄙ ㄨ ㄣ ㄤ ㄥ ㄨ ㄣ ㄤ ㄥ  
 ㄅ ㄆ ㄇ ㄏ ㄒ ㄓ ㄔ ㄕ ㄖ ㄗ ㄘ ㄙ ㄨ ㄣ ㄤ ㄥ ㄨ ㄣ ㄤ ㄥ

( 川 瀾 濤 濤 屯 方 百 里 爲 ) ( 廣 二 雙 線 二 忬 尺 ) ( 上 屬 皆 從 )

( )

川貫脣通齒川屯藥蕭白腐( 川炬川苦據( 川土川會爲  
 川屯尺川土屬皆從川

元

[yuán]

天

## Primary, primordial,

**principal, first.** From the ancient form of 上 (shàng, 'above,

superior, high')

symbolically suggesting a



hierarchy, and which is an ancient variant for the character for man 人. We may be witnessing here the idea of the first primordial man emerging in the Heavenly hierarchies. Many creation myths carry the notion of the emergence of a primordial cosmic man, as happening at the beginning of creation.

人 古 文 奇 字 人 也 象 形 於 子 曰 人 在 二 故 詰 詘

Shuo Wen gives an alternate etymology:

元 始 也 從 一 兀 聲

兀 高 而 二 于 也 從 一 在 人 二 讀 哥 麼 茂 賤 貳 兀 桑 里

元 derives from 一 and 兀 which plays a phonetic role, 從一兀聲, says the Shuo Wen. 一 becomes significant as it represents the primordial unity from which all things are born.

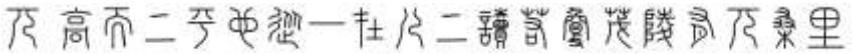
一 惟 初 太 極 道 立 終 一 道 於 天 地 化 成 萬 物 凡 一 上 屬 皆 從 一



The word 始[shǐ, begin] is used to attribute meaning to 元. 始 is an ideogram suggesting the origin of things, as from the women.



兀 [wù, towering, bald] is said by the Shuo Wen to be a tall structure with a level surface. Mountains, etc., were often anthropomorphized by the ancients.



Ancient forms of 元 include:



And variants include:

𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
 𠄎 • 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎

Those familiar with the creation myths of various traditions may find ideas therefrom abstracted in these variants. The

generation of dualistic principles 𠄎 , a primordial seed



, generation from a primordial water-mud matter

恒

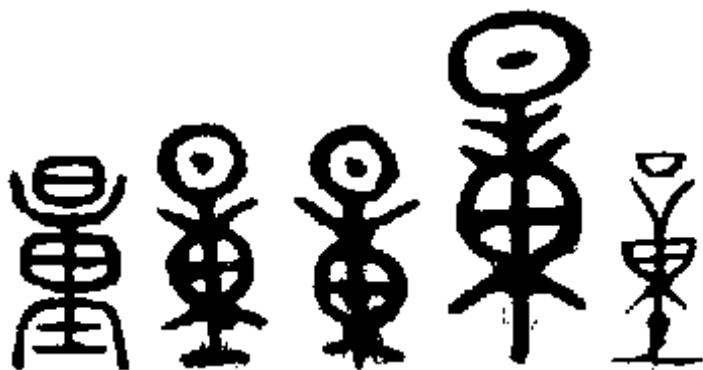
, a man emerging from a chaotic abyss ,  
all seem suggested in the variants we have of 元.

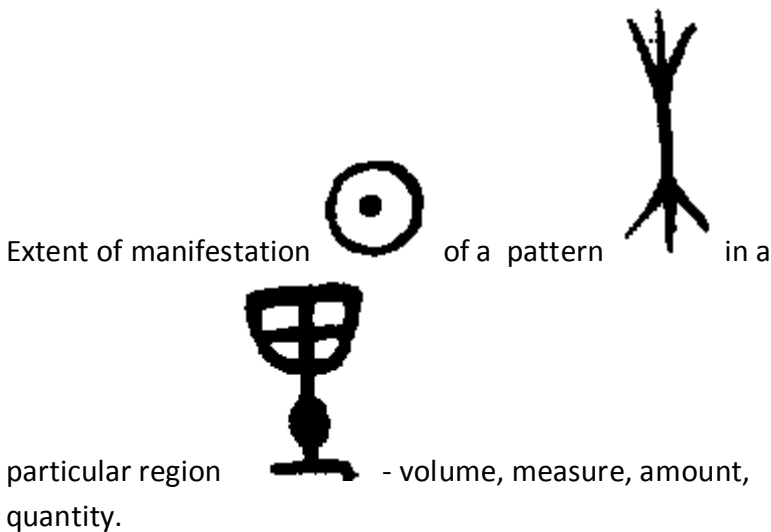
𡗗

"Probably etymologically the same word as 原," says Karlgren,  
on 元.

量

[liàng] **Amount; quantity; volume.**





The ancient ideogram for 日



is a symbol found across traditions. Various interpretations are attributed to it, ranging from the imagery of a solar disk, to the image of the cosmic womb fecundated by the primordial seed, the ideogram being an image of the merging of the primordial male and female principles, to that it symbolizes the quintessence of matter. Amongst alchemists, it has been the symbol for gold, the result of their work.





, in the context of this ideogram, then becomes that



which is refined out in fecund activity 里 . The  
prima materia or the initial matter of the process being the



earth



. The field 田



ideographically being where the active and passive  
principles merge, generating a fecund region of  
transformation.

The form 量 may thus be interpreted as the measure of the  
quintessence refined out in the transformative processes that  
may occur in nature. Or, the extent of manifestation of an

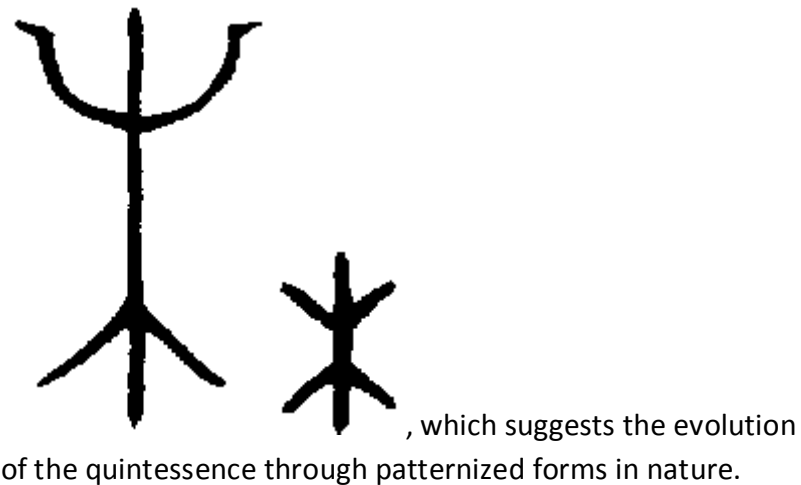


active principle

; and the factors behind the

generation of the principle being abstracted in the rest of the ideogram.

The — (unity, whole) present in the modern form may suggest harmonization in the process, a layer separating the generated quintessence from the factors that generate it, or even a layer playing the role of filtering the matter being transmuted. Or, even just an abstraction from some ancient forms which have a vessel like structure where — occurs now.

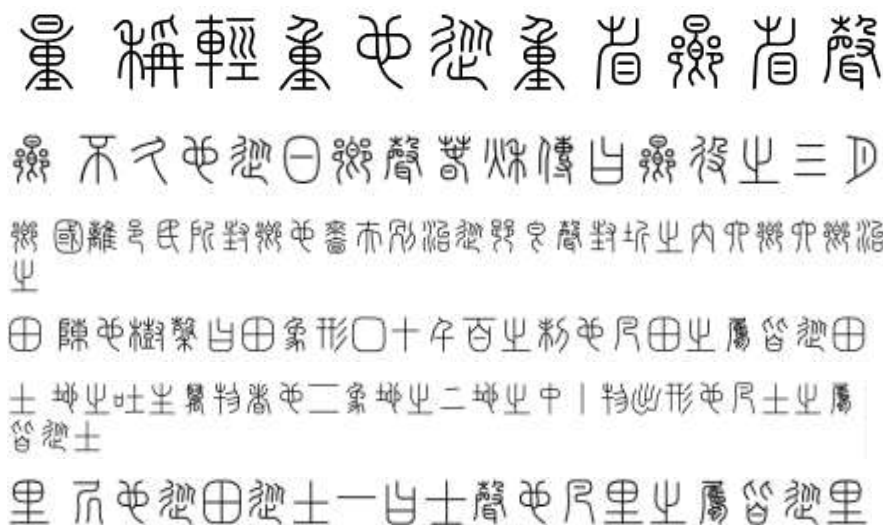






**Notes:**

Explanations from the Shuo Wen of 量 and related forms are given below.



日 實屯大易上精不虧變 〇 一象形尺日土屬皆變日  
 木 同屯同地而生東方土於變中二象其根尺木土屬皆變木

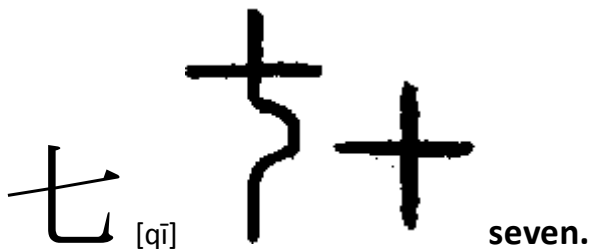
Note also that there exist associations of the tree with the mother principle, or the feminine principle. Trees give wood, from which are many human artifacts created. Trees bear fruits which help sustain life.

s

便 [biàn] 便得 convenient;

**informal; and then, in that case.**

"From 人 and 更, interpretation uncertain," says Karlgren. A man 人 beside a stoked fireplace 更, convenient. The stoking of the fireplace 更 by man 人 intensifies the fire, or continues the fire – and from that idea may derive the sense, 'and then.'



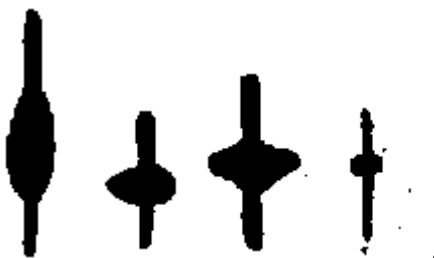
seven.



The ancient ideogram signifies an idea of breakthrough.



Distinguish ancient forms of seven such as from the ideogram for the number ten 十 [shí] which in its ancient forms have a disc-like structure around a central pillar



**Mnemonic:** As an upside-down modern western numeral



Ancient forms and variants include:

𠂇 𠂆 𠂇 十 十  
十 十 十

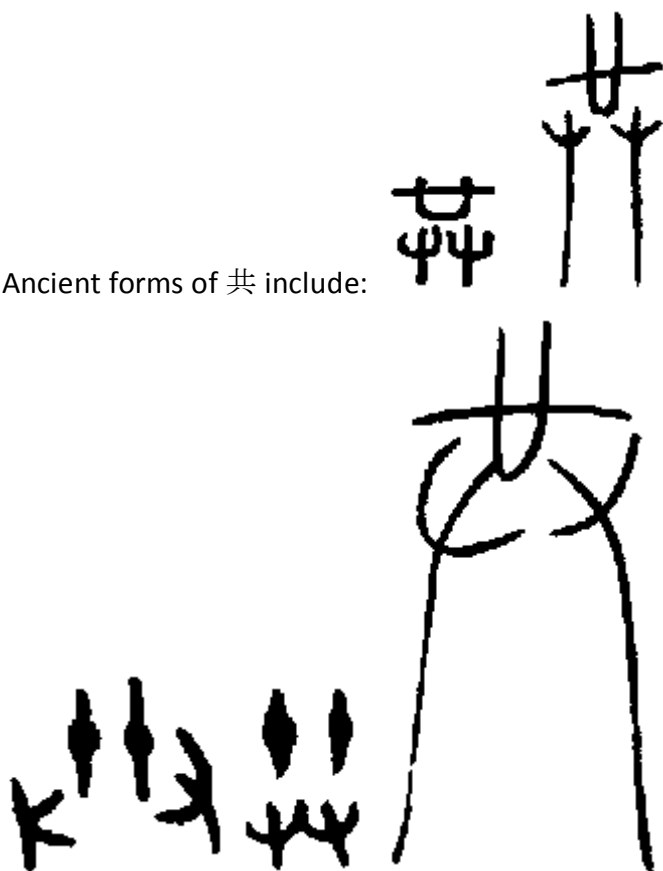
共 [gòng] 𠂇 share, together.

𠂇 同 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇 𠂇

The ancient form was composed of 𠂇 [niàn, twenty] and two

pairs of hands 𠂇. Twenty pairs of hands, thus - to come together. 𠂇 also carries in it the notion of two systems merging.

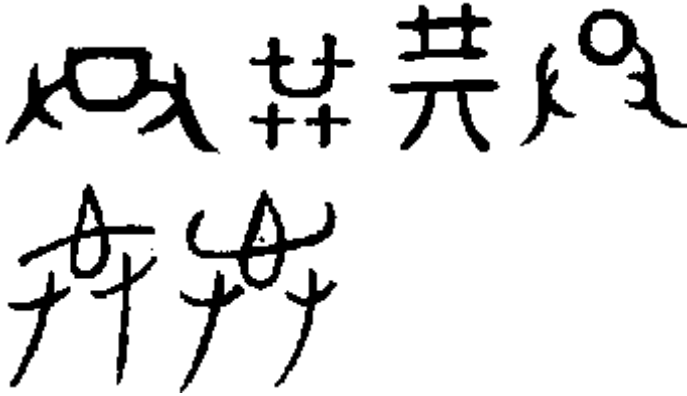
Ancient forms of 共 include:







And variants include:



接 [jiē] 接 connect; accept; come into

**contact with; come close; put together.** From 扌 (shǒu, hand) and 妾 (qiè, concubine). The action 扌 associated with a concubine 妾 – join with, accept, come close, put together, etc.

The ancient Chinese character for 妾 (qiè, concubine),

𠂔𠂔𠂔𠂔𠂔𠂔  
𠂔𠂔𠂔𠂔𠂔𠂔



, is composed of the imagery of a woman



and that of an upside down person.







A seal variant of 接 is:



言 記 [jì, remember] 言 己 On the left is 言 (yán,

words), and on the right is 己 [jǐ, self] which plays a phonetic role, according to the Shuo Wen. Words 言 remembered by the self 己.

己  is an ideogram thought of as representing a thread on a loom, or, an abstract ideogram for representing formative expression, etc. Expressed intent 言 which goes on

to take a tangible form  in the larger structure.

𠩺𠩺𠩺𠩺𠩺  
𠩺𠩺𠩺𠩺𠩺

金 [jīn] 金 metals; gold. Nuggets of metal

underneath the earth. Metals were thought to evolve in the matrix of the earth. With baser metals such as lead eventually evolving to become gold. Ancient forms seem to



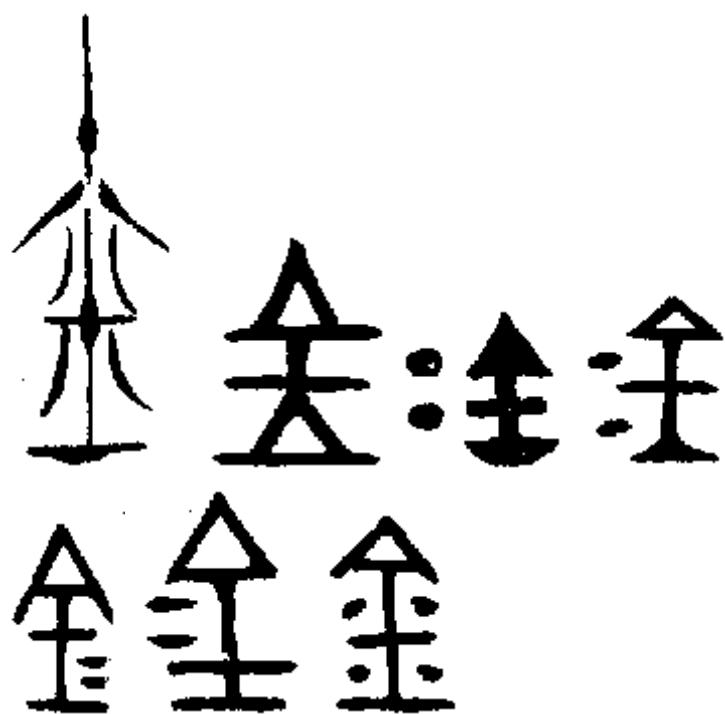
suggest this idea of ordering evolution.

金 匱 金 匱 黃 爲 土 爲 之 難 不 生 亦 百 鍊 不 輕 變 革 不 韋 圖 方 土 於  
生 於 土 變 土 尸 又 淫 象 金 壯 土 中 形 今 聲 凡 金 土 屬 皆 變 金

金 金 金 金

金 金 金 金





And variants include:

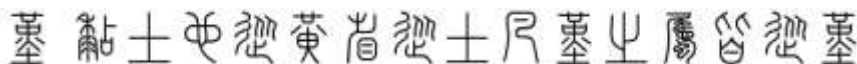


# 難

[nán] **difficult** ; **hard** [nàn] **disaster; adversity.**



On the left of 難 is an ideogram for clayey soil:



On the right is the imagery of a bird. As an ideographic association: A bird in a drought stricken region, where there is nothing but clay – in distress and difficulty.

To further analyze the form 難, it is composed of 土 and 隹.

[tǔ, earth] and 黃 [huáng, yellow, withered].

Yellow 黃 Soil 土, thus 'clay.'

黃

The character for ‘yellow,’ 黃 is explained thus by the Shuo Wen:

黃 地土色也從田炎聲炎古火炎凡黃土屬皆從黃

田

Earth’s colour. From 田 [tián, field] and the ideogram

炎

炎[guāng] playing a phonetic role.

炎 is an

ancient form of 光

ancient form of 光 [guāng , light, bright, illuminated]. The ideogram 光 is the picture of a man with fire

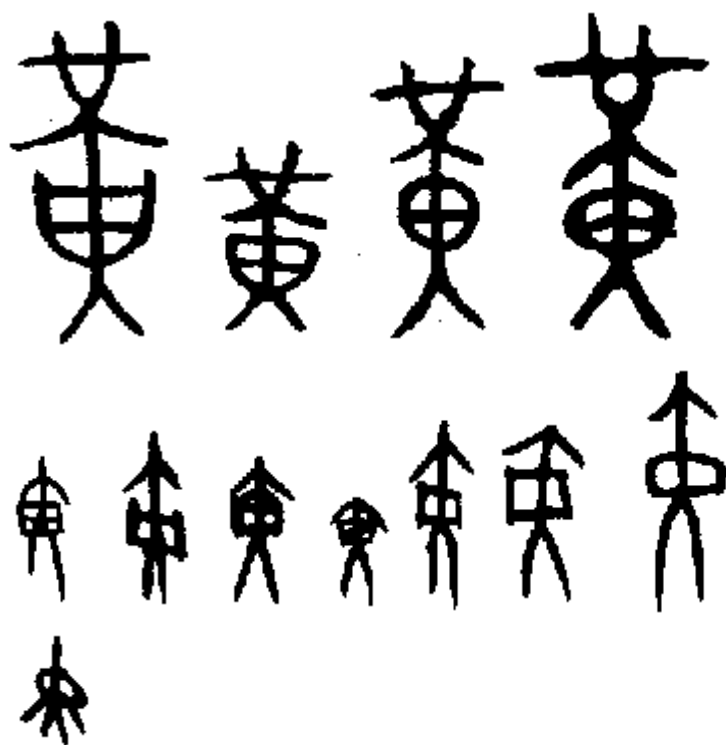
atop his head, says the dictionary. Color of the fields 田 in

田

draught-like weather 炎 . The most ancient forms of the character 黃, yellow, is that of a person with a rectangular

炎

marking on his waist, likely a yellow colored pendant – either gold, or jade.



The character 璜 [huáng] which has the ideogram for jade 玉[yù, jade] added to the left of 黃, is described such:



A semi-annular piece of jade. “An ancient semi-annular ceremonial jade pendant,” says Wenlin on 璜. An ancient source says, “黃實古玉佩之象也.” This suggests strongly that 黃 was likely a pendant of jade, yellow colored, worn at the waist. We may theorize: The character 黃 ended up being used for the colour yellow, while a cognate form 璜 came to be attributed to the jade pendant itself.

### Notes:

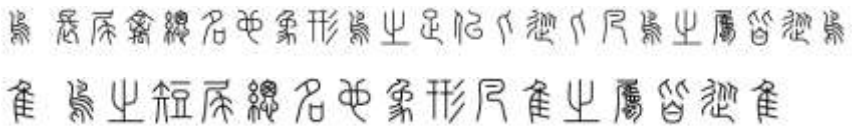
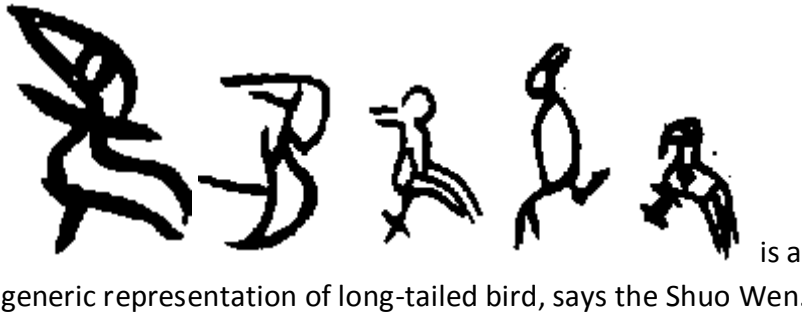
The ideogram 隹[zhuī]




represents a short-tailed bird. While the

ideogram 鳥[niǎo]





"A kind of dove. . . The graph is a drawing," says Karlgren, describing 隹.

"The state in which are the 隹 birds, when the earth is dried and barren; famine, misery, difficulty of living," says Weiger, explaining this ideogram 難[nán, difficult ; hard] .

The left hand side of the character 難 in its modern written


form appears as 莫, a character which does not appear in the Shuo Wen. Explaining it, Karlgren says, "The graph shows a man (prisoner?) with back-bound hands."

Two variants of the character 難 [nán, difficult ; hard] are

found in the Shuo Wen.

難 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏  
𨾏 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏 𨾏

嗟

The character 嘆  [hàn] is attributed the meanings 'scorched, parched, dry in the sun, etc.'

嗟 乾 屯 耕 蠱 田 日 嗟 遯 日 莖 聲 易 日 燥 蠱 特 番 莫 嗟 兮 火

風 [fēng] 風 Wind. The form shows insects 虫

carried 凵 by the wind. "The scholastic commentator says that the wind produces the insects; an older form had 𠂔 and under this a stroke of doubtful meaning," says Karlgren,


𦰩 𦰪 𦰫 𦰬



屬八屬屯東方曰卯庚屬東南曰巽卯屬南方曰景屬西南曰未屬西方曰闔闔屬西北曰不周屬北方曰庚其屬東北曰融屬東北曰聲屬新嘉  
生故蟲八曰而七尺屬土屬宮也屬



Shuo Wen interprets the form as composed of 虫[chóng,

insect, worm] and 凡  [fán, ordinary, every, altogether]. Richard Sears interprets the form 凡 as depicting a sail, “The sail is big and covers everything. Thus the meaning of covers. Its modern form is in 帆帆.”

凡用指而音也二二耦也二二古及

Wieger explains the character thus:

## LESSON 21.

About the primitive 凡 *fan*<sup>2</sup>.

A

**Fan**<sup>2</sup>. Idea of generality, of universality; 數之總名也。This character was differently explained by the philologists. — Some, starting from an ancient form that was probably but an abbreviation, explain: 从及 (an old form, L. 19 E). 从二, 會意。The number 二 of heaven and earth, generalised by 及; all beings existant. — The classical form of the character seems to denote a more natural explanation: — the unity, the origin of beings and numbers (L. 1 A), contained in a kind of primitive, which denotes the generalisation of a particular case. It is the true notion of 凡. — Phonetic series 19. The scribes often write 凡 instead of 夙 or 丸 (L. 11 E J). See also 夙 (L. 11 G).


B

**Fèng**<sup>1</sup>. The wind; 从蟲省。凡聲。For, says the Glose, when the wind blows, insects are born; 風動, 生蟲. This composition and interpretation are in the manner of Li-ssû. — The ancient character was derived from 日 sun, 丿 motion (L. 7 A), 凡 extension, expansion. All this seems to mean that the atmospheric currents are produced by the action of solar rays; which is true for some winds. — It is the 182th radical of a group of characters relating to storms, etc. Phonetic series 439. See 風 (L. 11 C).

色 [sè]

Colour, facial expression, lust,

**desire.** From the imagery of a kneeling man, and the

imagery of a person above. The ideogram , which in ancient forms seems to be a kneeling person, and was in later times interpreted as a 'seal,' indicates the idea of restrain or conformance. That which keeps the human conformant – desires, appearances and colours, etc. Facial expressions as the expression is conformant to the feeling of the human heart. "The color of the face corresponds with the feelings of the heart, as the stamp reproduces the seal," says Wieger.

"That which a 人 man uses for his 印 seal: printing ink, color," says Karlgren.

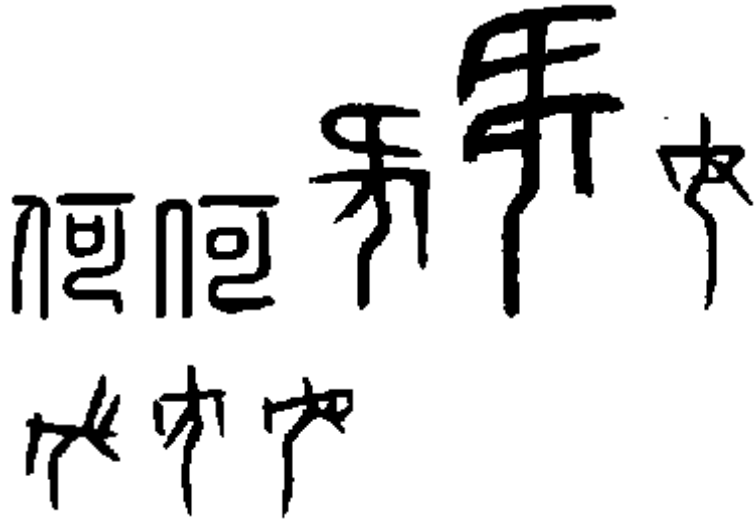
色 顔 氣 也 慾 人 弓 尺 色 止 屬 皆 慾 色

何

何 [hé] What? From 人 (rén, person) and 可 (kě, possible) which plays both a significant and a phonetic

role. A man 亻 pondering the possibilities 可. 可 may also be understood an expression of thought, expanding, seeking resolution, seeking 'answers,' so to say.

Ancient forms include:



And variants include:

𢇛 𢇛 𢇛 𢇛 𢇛  
𢇛

變

[biàn] **change**. From a hand holding an instrument,

indicating use of force, 言 indicating words, and, by extension,



expressed intent, and two strings

Imagine a charioteer controlling a chariot, or changing its



course – he does it by holding the reins

in his hand



, and steering the chariot as per his intent



變 𢇛 𢇛 𢇛 𢇛 𢇛 𢇛



About the primitive 乚 and its two important compounds, 匸 and 匚, with their series; then about the derivatives 直 眞 隱, a group apart.

A 乚 乚

Yin<sup>3</sup>. Curve; to cover, to conceal; 曲也。像。隱蔽之形。

First series: 乚 combined with 一 (1. 1), gives

B 匸 匚

Hsi<sup>3</sup>. Chest, trunk, box; 从乚, 上有一覆之, 指事。Therefore 一 represents the cover, 乚 the chest or the action of containing. — It is the 23th radical. — Note the next derivatives:

# 區

[qū] **Region, area.** For a mnemonic: Multiple

regions demarcated in a space.

區 踦 區 臧 隱 屯 巡 品 在 匚 中 品 眾 屯  
品 眾 庚 屯 巡 三 目 尺 品 止 屬 皆 巡 品

The ideogram 品[pǐn] which now has the meanings “product, article, goods, etc.” is attributed the meaning “眾庶” by the Shuo Wen. The phrase would mean ‘all people’ in modern usage.

匚 惠 標 貳 所 夾 臧 屯 巡 匚 二 貳 一 覆 止 尺 匚 止 屬 皆 巡 匚 講 哥 標 同

"To dispose, to stow away 品 things in a 匚 box; 从品在匚中, 會意。By extension, lodging, place, site; 四方也," says Wieger.

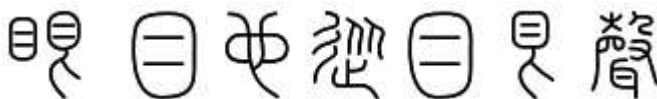
# 眼


[yǎn]




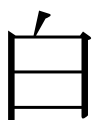
Eye.





From the imagery of an eye, 目  ( mù ) and the imagery

of a person with a big eye 眊  ( gèn ), which can suggest, in context, the idea of perception, or rooted perception.



[bái] **White, plain.** The modern form has come to

resemble the " 日 sun with a point at the top: sun pointing upwards, rising," as Karlgren describes it. The ancient form



resembles what could be an acorn, a silk worm cocoon, or even an abstract obelisk shape suggesting a

白 齒 方 色 中 含 用 美 特 色 白 齒 人 合 二 二 含 數 尺 白 上 屬 皆 齒 白

558



黨

[dǎng] **Darkness, gang, political party.**



From 黑(hēi, black) which shows accumulated soot on a window, and 尚(shàng, esteem) which is phonetic, according to the Shuo Wen. 尚 may here also contribute to the sense ‘of the quality.’ A gang, or a party likened to accumulated soot or dirt.

聯  [lián]

**unite, join;** ""The seal has 絲 to

the right, corrupted in the modern form: to string together 耳 the ears of slain enemies," says Karlgren. "How gruesome! Let us say, you get in touch with people by way of their 耳 ears," says Wenlin.

聯 連 也 從 耳 從 絲 從 耳 耳 連 於 頰 從 絲 絲 連 不 絲 也

Shuo Wen suggests that both ears 耳 are anatomically connected 絲 at the sides of the face.

望  [wàng]

**look; full moon; desire;**

**hope.**

望 出 人 土 外 望 界 還 也 望 人 望 省 聲

人 望

Composed of 人 and 望 abstracted says the Shuo Wen.

望 月 滿 也 齊 日 相 望 也 類 君 望 月 望 臣 望 全 全 類 從 也

望

望 had the meaning 'full moon,' according to the Shuo Wen. Other sources attribute to it meanings such as "look at, gaze at; hope."

A man standing on the earth 人 全 gazing at a full moon 望 ,

whose light fades far across into the horizon 人 . The sense conveyed by that imagery in the psyche of the ancient Chinese people, perhaps.

"Moon facing the sun, full moon; to face, gaze to a distance, look out for, long for, expect, hope -- 月 moon is signific and 亡 phonetic; below, the seal has 王 (interpretation uncertain), not 王," says Karlgren.

Ancient forms and variants include:

聖 知 聖 知

聖 知

認

[rèn] consider; recognize; know, understand.

認 類 也 從 音 夕 聲 論 語 曰 其 音 也 認



From 言 (yán, words) and 忍(rěn, endurance)



. The character for endurance is made of the imager of a sword on a heart. To study words 言 with endurance 忍, is to arrive at an understanding 認 of what they express.

刀 忍 心 象 形 刀 止 屬 皆 忍 刀



刀 [dāo] is pictographic representation of a knife, a sword, etc.

刀 刀 鑒 心 象 刀 止 刀 止 形 刀 止 屬 皆 忍 刀

刃 [rèn] is the sword with its sharp side marked with a dot, according to some; a drop of blood on the sword, according others. An ancient meaning of the character seems to have been the 'restrain of the sword.'

As an ideographic interpretation: The restrain of the sword-principle 刃 on the human heart 心. To endure is to restrain the human emotions, in a sense. There are other interpretations.

刃 刀 匕 匕 土 藏 匕 在 頁 上 中 象 形 博 士 說 匕 爲 火 藏 匕 匕 上 屬 皆 從 匕

**leather;** "Hide, skin; to flay, take

off; deprive of -- picture of a skin split open, a hide seen from the back, with legs apart," says Karlgren. Occurring as a component the ideogram may convey a sense of 'separation,' as one would associate with the leather hide that separates as well as protects the system it covers from the external world.



𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎 𠄎  
𠄎

建 [jiàn] 𠄎 Construct, establish, set up,

**found.** "From 𠄎 signific and 廴 yǐn phonetic," says Karlgren. 𠄎(yù) is a hand holding a stylus, writing, and symbolizes conscious creative action. 廴 symbolized extended movement.

廴 "is 彳 lengthened, to represent long strides," says Wieger.

廴 is the "Picture of footprints similar to 彳," says Karlgren. Prolonged or extended movement, says the Shuo Wen.





帶 [dài]

帶

belt; zone; carry, bring, take.

"Picture of skirts and girdle at the top," says Karlgren. Said to be the imagery of a waist belt worn in ancient times, and clothing hanging from it.

帶 紳 屮 男 子 肇 帶 婦 人 帶 絲 象 繫 係 止 形 係 止 彳 巾 從 彳 巾

Note that 冫[mì] indicates a cover and 巾[jīn, piece of cloth] indicates clothing, likely an ornamental cloth worn at the waist.

几 覆 屮 從 一 二 坐 尺 几 止 屬 皆 從 几  
巾 係 巾 屮 從 几 一 象 原 屮 尺 巾 止 屬 皆 從 巾

Variants include:













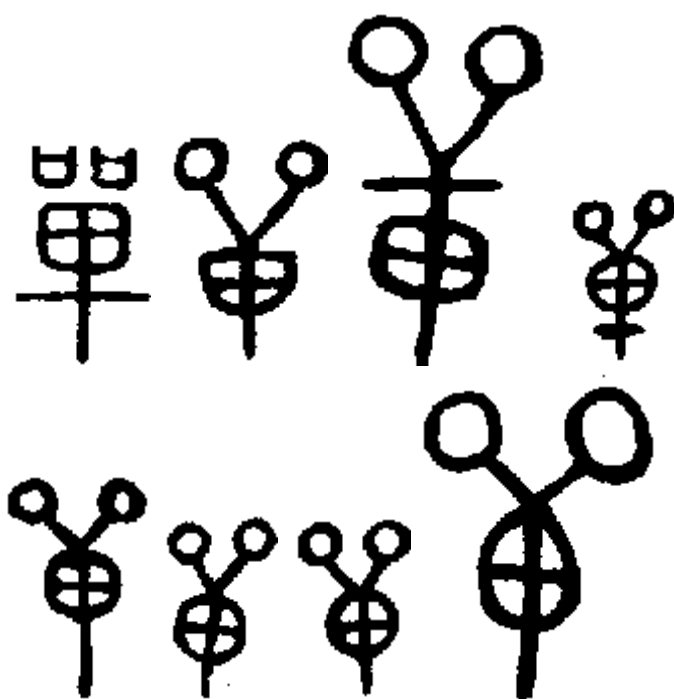
  
 戰<sub>[zhàn]</sub> War, warfare, battle.

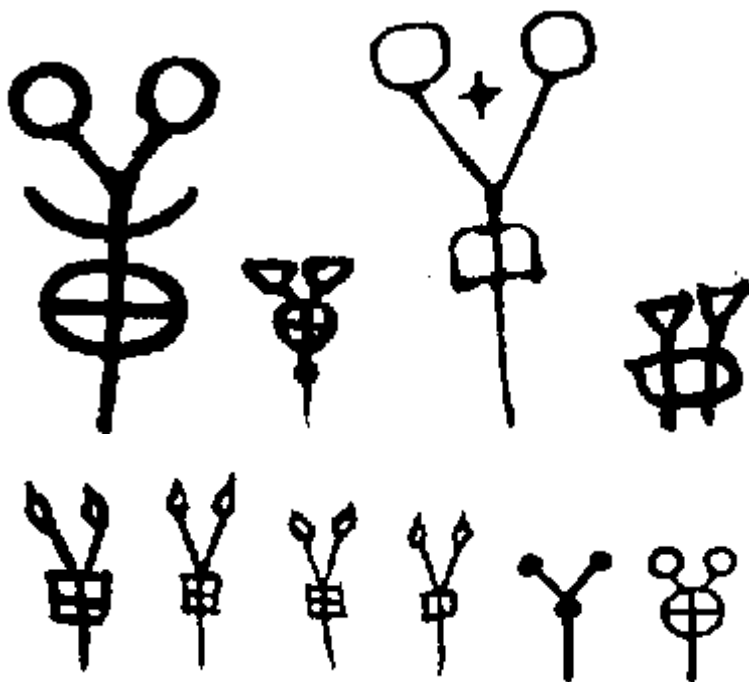
The left hand side of the ideogram, 單[dān], has the meanings alone; single; sole; etc. "Single, alone; only; odd (in number); single sheet, a list, a bill, a slip," says Karlgren. Lindqvist says it was originally the imagery of two hunting stones tied together

單 大 也 巡 田 十 夾 聲 關

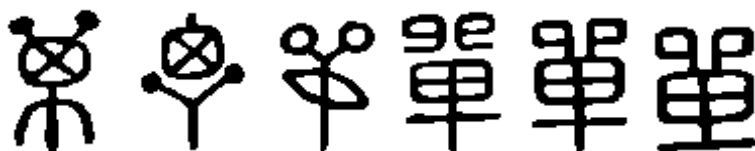
單 and 戈 (gē, spear, a halberd) together combine to give the character for war.

570





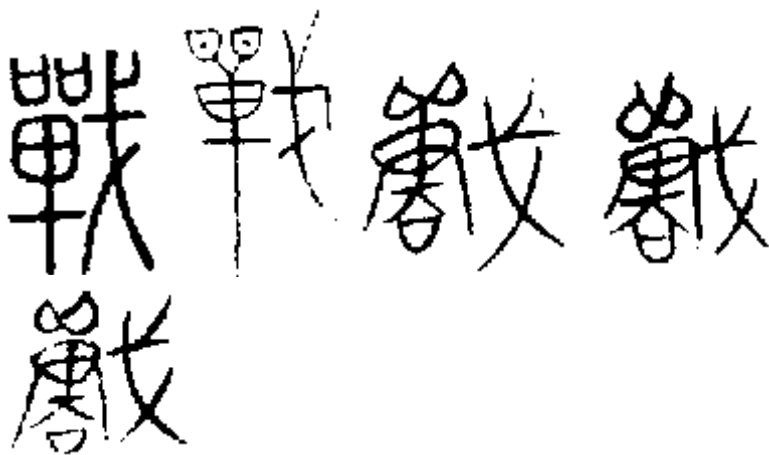
And variants of the same include:



Richard Sears says, “單 is a cicada, 單 is borrowed for the sound. The original meaning was 蟬.”



戰 has the ancient forms:



**Note:**

𪔐[xuán] [xuān] [sòng] is a character attributed the meanings  
'to cry, an alarmed cry, etc.'



愛

[ài] **Love.** The ancient form seems to show

restrained movement around a bound heart.



The modern form is composed of 𢇛 (zhǎo, a hand), 冃 (mì, cover), 心 (xīn, heart) and 攴 (zhǐ, restrained movement).

運 [yùn] 運 Transport, movement; use,

**wield, utilize.**

From the ideogram for movement 辵 (是, chuò, go) and 軍 (jūn, army, military, ideographically a reinforced military chariot, or a formation of military chariots. ). The sense of movement 辵 modified with the military chariot - as that which carries, transports, affects military change, etc.

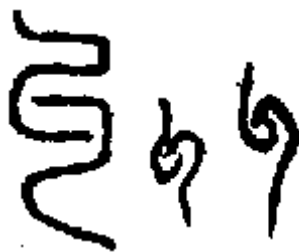
運 超 越 也 從 辵 車 聲

是 也 超 越 也 從 辵 車 聲 超 越 也 從 辵 車 聲 超 越 也 從 辵 車 聲

車 園 圍 也 四 午 入 爲 車 從 辵 省 從 車 車 飛 車 也

收 [shōu] gather; receive; accept

On the left hand side is an ideogram showing two



interconnected vines ㄣ and on the right side is a hand holding an instrument, suggesting an action involving force, or effort. To receive, gather, or, accept is to make a connection with another system.



Karlgren explains the ideogram such, "To 耨 mow with 耂 [jiū] a 'hook', a sickle." In another instance, Karlgren attributes these meanings to 𠂔 : " 'to twist' ..; 'plait; unite' ."


攷 擢 也 巡 支 子 聲

之 相 紆 纒 也 一 曰 瓜 瓠 結 之 起 象 形 尺 之 上 屬 皆 起 之

**Note:** 卩 “represent the tangle of creeping plants,” says Wiegner.

聽  **listen.** A person sitting on the

ground, listening.  suggests right perception,  is an

ear listening, and  is a person seated on the ground.

聽 吟 也 悲 耳 直 全 聲

Note:

直 is composed of 直[zhí straight] and 心[xīn, heart].

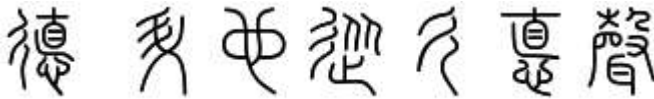
喜 外得姤 入 内得姤 己 屯 直 直 屯

The seal script of the character 德 (de) is shown. It features a stylized 'eye' or 'heart' shape on the right, with a vertical line on the left, and a small '8' shape at the bottom.

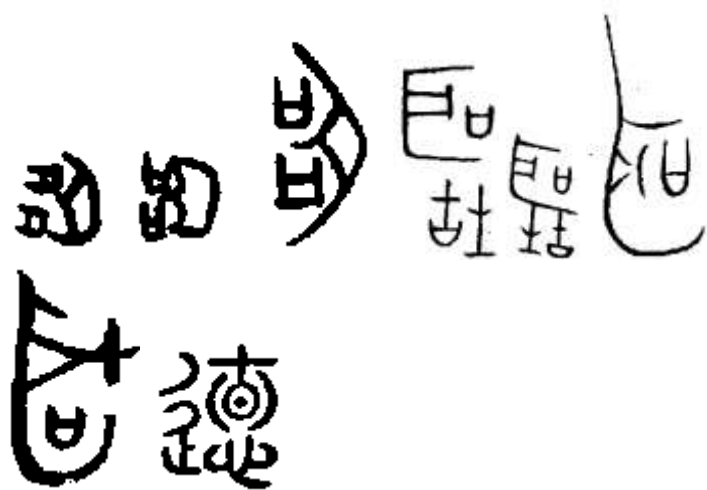
The character for 'virtue' in Chinese is 德

The regular script of the character 德 (de) is shown. It is a complex character with multiple strokes, including a large 'heart' shape on the right and a vertical line on the left.

[dé]; may ideographically be interpreted as a path taken 彳 [chì, 'footstep'] with an upright 直 [zhí, 'straight'] heart 心 [xīn, 'heart'].

Seven variants of the character 德 in seal script are shown. They are arranged horizontally and represent different historical or regional forms of the character, all derived from the same basic components.

Variants of 聽 include:













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